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Thomas Carlyle.



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THOMAS CARLYLE.

RACE, epoch, surroundings, these are the three primordial forces, says M. Taine in the brilliant introduction to his History of English Literature, which, determining all later characteristics and productions of a people, ought first of all to be studied, if we would understand truly the literature of any period or of any country. Is it not also true, that if we would know any great man and estimate aright the work he has given to the world, we must ask some questions as to the stock whence he sprang, his environments, especially at the most impressionable period of his life, and the forces and requirements of the day of his appearance?

Thomas Carlyle's message has been to all English-speaking peoples, and he was not a man given to needless assertion of his nationality, or of protestation of his love of country, but his character is so essentially Scottish, and the marks of this are so evident even in circumstances where he breaks entirely loose from Scottish traditions, that in his case it will not be found idle to give some attention to the points just indicated.

The Lowland Scotch are, like the English, mainly Saxon, but with a much stronger intermingling of Celtic and Scandinavian elements. The steadiness,

settling often into stolidity, which marks the Saxon, is certainly not wanting, but is less deeply ingrained, and yields oftener to a stern and irresistible enthusiasm in the Scot than in the Southron. The steady conservatism with gradual reform, so justly the boast of England, is much less characteristic of Scottish history, which has oftener violent changes to record. The fervid imagination of the Celt absorbed into the more truth-loving Saxon nature may be the spring of that devotion to an *idea* that again and again has determined the course of Scotland's history, and the hardiness and contempt of ease which were often her best defense against her enemies, the legacy of the early Viking settlers.

The Scot, too, was trained in a different and far harder school than the Englishman. His land is rugged, often barren, and yielded but a scanty subsistence to hard toil, and he was obliged to be in constant readiness to repel the attacks of his richer and stronger neighbors of the South. Think of the long years of the Wars of Independence, when the country was devastated, not only by the armies of the English king, but by the Scots themselves, as a means of defense, and which gave ever afterwards to their patriotism its passionate and aggressive tone. I am *not* an Englishman was the first article in a Scotchman's creed. This article was taught, and with some emphasis, to the English at Bannockburn, but though the Scottish nationality was never again in such danger, the raids from the "auld enemy" continued to harass them. Think, too, of the long years of internal strife, when the kingdom was so

often under the curse of the prophet : “ Children were its princes, and babes ruled over it.” Anyone who has traveled in the southern districts of England and Scotland must have noted the absence in the latter of those beautiful, quiet, old-world towns and villages so characteristic of England, where the minster built by the monks centuries ago, still stands ready for its holy uses, and the old gabled houses round which the children are playing to-day seem to have sheltered a hundred generations. North of the Tweed we have our ancient abbeys and our mediæval barons’ keeps, but they are in ruins, and as for ordinary homes few indeed have survived in a country where a man could congratulate himself like Wat Tinlinn, that his house had not been burned for a year or more.

The roughness of these marauding times was not yet subdued when a new element, the most important factor of all in the History of Scotland, broke it up into new factions. “ I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword,” was once more proved true. Nowhere did the great Protestant idea — the responsibility of each man to his Maker — take a firmer hold than in Scotland, and though the New Light had to struggle here as elsewhere against open enmity, and still more dangerous, interested and selfish partisanship, it sank so deep and became so fruitful, that henceforth the energies of the nation were turned into new channels. Though the Reformation wars were marked by cruelty and rapacity on both sides, yet the heart of the nation was then thinking out the question “ What is man’s chief

end," and did arrive at a conception in answer to it, which has been the foundation of all that is worthiest in its history since that time. There was no compromising, no concessions, as with the English reformers. The change was radical, and though we may regret the intolerance and headlong iconoclasm of our ancestors, yet their zeal for the whole truth, their earnest anxiety to get at the "eternal fact of things," is our most precious inheritance. One institution of priceless value, that of the parish school, dates from this time. It was John Knox's plan, scorned as a devout imagination by the nobles, to apply the whole of the immense wealth taken from the Roman Catholic Church to religious and educational purposes, and though it was partly thwarted by these same greedy barons, enough was done in the establishment of schools to make education possible to all. Later, when the leaven had had time to work, and when dense ignorance still prevailed in English rural districts, it was rare to find in the south of Scotland a peasant who could not read.

As time went on, the power of the nobles, here as elsewhere, was weakened, and after the Stuarts were seated on the English throne that divine right of kings for which they made so desperate a bid, was more exercised in Scotland than was ever possible in the sister kingdom. This despotism was brought to bear, too, on the point on which the Scot was most sensitive and most tenacious of his rights — his religion. That terrible "killing time," as it was called when the infatuated kings tried through ban-

ishment, slavery, torture and death to force episcopacy on a nation covenanted to oppose it, has left indelible marks on the national character. It is easy to find fault with these stern covenanters. They may have been one-sided and intolerant, but it is not easy to be tolerant of a religion which is preached to you by gun-shot, and, in the main, their battle was one of right against might.

In the more peaceful years that followed the Revolution and the Union, the Scottish people had time to develop their powers and resources. In spite of the two short Jacobite outbreaks, the country had more unbroken peace than it had enjoyed for centuries, and progress was rapid, both in material prosperity and intellectual advancement. The 18th century culture, together with the inevitable reaction from the high-water mark of religious feeling, had brought about in high circles an atmosphere of cold, sometimes sceptical, reasoning, and had given rise to an elegant and polished literature, more French than Scottish in character. But in the masses of the people the current of religious life still ran in the channels which had been worked out at the Reformation and deepened by the times of persecution. Before the close of the century the influence of Burns had begun to warm the heart of the nation, and, by awakening its genial qualities which strife and oppression had kept too long in abeyance, to broaden its sympathies and soften its asperities.

What, then, had been the outcome of all these influences we have glanced at, and what manner of man was the Scot of a hundred years ago? It is

hard, says M. Taine, to be born in Scotland ; and though her sons and her daughters have nothing but amusement to return for the Frenchman's compassion, it is to be confessed that it is not there that the lighter graces of life will be seen in perfection. This Scotchman, whom we would picture, is almost aggressively independent, proud and shy, yet not too shy to push his way in the world. He is reticent, but scarcely cold in his manners, which are marked indeed by a suppressed vehemence of feeling, apt at times, though rarely, to overcome him, and leave him ashamed of the outburst. He is grave in his conversation, and prone to silence, yet not without the gift of laughter, and with a fund of shrewd, dry humor. His affections are strong, but he is exceedingly reserved in his expression of them. "Love is an awfu' like word to use, when folk's weel," the Scotch laddie in a recent story says, and the touch is true to the life. Up to a certain point the Scot is cautious. Once thoroughly roused, he is capable of risking everything for the one end in view. He is argumentative, fond especially of theological discussion, yet reverential in his religion and austere in his ideal of morality.

Such a man was Carlyle's father, and such a man, in many respects, was Thomas Carlyle himself.

Carlyle was born in the year 1795, in Ecclefechan in Dumfriesshire—a small, solidly built village. Its surroundings are bare and bleak, but with a wide outlook across upland stretches to the Border hills. His home was one destitute of luxuries, but above want, and the poverty of the family was of that

wholesome, self-respecting order which asks and needs no commiseration. The father was a stonemason, afterwards a farmer, known for his thorough handiwork. A God-fearing man, but in whom the rugged border characteristics were still strong. He was specially noted for his pithy energetic language — the dread of those who roused his just indignation. His son records as his deliberate opinion of him that he had scarcely known any man of larger natural endowment. In his family he was a stern, grave man, with a strong contempt for idle talk, or ‘clatter,’ as he called it, and his children, though honoring him for his sterling sincerity in thought, word and deed, could, in their younger days, scarcely get near enough to him for love. It was not so with his wife. Hers was a strong, tender nature, full of seeking anxious mother-love, with keen instincts and wide sympathies. Her son loved to think she came of good stock. “She was of the, to me, fairest descent,” he says, “that of the pious, the just, and the good.” There was a large family, and work for all as soon as they were fit for it, but their daily toil, exacting though it was, did not absorb all their thoughts. Books were in the house, and they were read. Religious influences, too, cast strong lights on their simple life. The Carlyles belonged to the Seceders, a body of Presbyterians who left the Church of Scotland when the 18th century chill had begun to benumb its powers. In his old age Carlyle writes of the little thatched meeting-house where they worshipped, “It was more sacred to me than the biggest cathedral then extant could have been,”

and, far as he travelled from his old belief, to the very end the Church of his childhood held him with the "strong hand of her purity."

There is little to be recorded of Carlyle's childhood. Very soon a *loneliness* of temperament and a certain perversity of temper which made him as his mother said, "gey ill to deal wi," discovered themselves, but there was manifested also such vigour of mental parts as made his father determine to give him the best education open to him, in the hope that he would enter the Church. To Annan Grammar School he went, therefore, and whoever wishes to know something of his impressions — we will not say the exact facts — of his school life, may consult his description of Hinterschlag in Sartor Resartus. He has not much good to say of his teachers. "How shall he give kindling," he asks, "in whose own inward man there is no live coal, but all is burnt to a dead grammatical cinder?" School days were soon over, and at fourteen the boy was launched into the very independent life of a student in the Edinburgh University. It was then the very heyday of Edinburgh's splendid literary period. Scott had written his Lay of the Last Minstrel, Jeffrey was at the head of the Review, the Quarterly had just been started, and the best wit of the three kingdoms used to congregate at the Friday club. But all this brilliant life did not touch that of the solitary Annandale lad. He did not distinguish himself except in mathematics, and his college life is painted in Sartor in no brighter colors than his school days. "The young," he says, "looked up to their spiritual

nurses, and for food they were bidden to eat the east wind." Already a little scornful, as he always was, of everything that did not fall in with his own current of thought, his studies in the classics brought him little delight. Cicero was to him "a windy person," and Horace "egotistical." Only in mathematics did he find satisfaction — there, at least, the conclusions could not be gainsaid, and it was a rest for his earnest mind to find somewhere a firm footing.

But far deeper questions were rising in him, and already, as he tells us, "a certain ground plan of human nature and life began to be fashioned in him." These considerations were brought home to him more forcibly from the fact that his parents had destined him for the Church, and the thought was forced on him, "If I am to speak to men on life and immortality, what do I myself believe?" He began his Divinity course, however, and as the Theological session was short, supported himself by teaching in the intervals. One of these engagements was at Kirkcaldy, where he stayed three years, a time chiefly memorable for his friendship with Edward Irving and his attachment to Margaret Gordon. The latter was perhaps a thing more of the imagination than of the heart, and his renunciation of her left him with a widened horizon of thought and feeling, and with no very serious wound to be healed. His love for Irving was life-long. They were a strangely contrasted pair, these two young men who used to pace the Kirkcaldy sands discoursing on all things in heaven and earth. Irving's was a sunny,

genial, trusting nature ; Carlyle's moody, reserved, yet vehement. Irving had begun to preach already, and the gist of his sermons, we are told, was always : " If these things are true, why not do it ? You had better do it. There will be nothing but misery and ruin in not doing it." The homily might have been Carlyle's own. Both were intensely convinced that any enduring activity must be rooted in belief — but belief in what ? Here came the parting of the ways. Irving thought that society had become barren and unfruitful because it had let slip many beliefs which had nourished the virtues of earlier times. To Carlyle, the explanation was that men were holding on through supineness and cowardice to a creed which they no longer believed. Irving, eager to show that to him Christianity was no dead letter, impatient to embody his faith in some manifest way, and dreaming that through him his generation was to be guided into the Church of the Future, was led into a region of unreality where beliefs were not tested by reason and experience. Latter-day miracles, prophesyings, gifts of tongues, all were accepted as signs of the Divine favor, and the workers of these wonders received as heaven-sent. We know how it ended — how, cast out as a heretic, he found himself not a chief pillar in the Church, but the tool of a small set of enthusiasts, perhaps even Charlatans. He died of the disappointment, but it did not kill his trust in his fellow-men, nor his faith in God. Carlyle's temptations were altogether of a different order. Irving could never believe anybody less true than himself. Carlyle could with difficulty

believe others as true as he was. It was from no petty jealousy — rather from an exacting nature — “to be wroth with those we love doth work like madness on the brain,” and just because he would so fain have held his fellow-men in love and reverence, he was possessed with a sort of rage against whatever in them seemed to savor of shallowness and insincerity. It was an indignation that had a noble element in it, but his natural irascibility and impatience of temper strengthened and exaggerated it, until, in later life, it became his habitual mood.

Carlyle's heart was never in his school work, and as soon as he had saved a little money he came back to Edinburgh. The “grave prohibitive doubts” which had assailed him were now *so* grave, that work in the Church could not be thought of. It was a serious disappointment to his father and mother, and knowing this, Carlyle suffered too. He used to look back on that time and the two or three years that followed as the most miserable of his life. His health was bad, his prospects were uncertain. He was conscious of power without knowing how to use it, “all budding with capabilities,” as he tells us in *Sartor*, “but knew not yet which was his main and true one.” Around him, too, he saw poverty, discontent, the poor still paying in famine prices for the wars with France, and the rich working for safety only in repression. In his morbid state, he was as “a nerve o’er which do creep the else unfelt oppressions of the world.” The times were out of joint, and, worst of all, questioning eternity, he heard no satisfying answer, and could find no cur-

rent setting towards good, to which his own fate and that of his fellow-men could be trusted. He felt that a true conception of his relation to the Universe is a man's only right basis of action, yet what relation was possible when everywhere he felt himself confronted with unexplainable, unconquerable evil? He craved sympathy, but his trouble drove him into a bitterness which estranged it. Irving and his mother were his best friends in those dark days. Irving held always before him high hopes of the work he was one day to do, and, though his mother could not answer, could not even understand the difficulties that beset him, through her, Carlyle knew always of one life nourished on faith in good. He has described to us in *Sartor*, and in more explicit terms elsewhere, how deliverance from this misery came to him. He was walking the streets one day in this distressful mood, when all at once, as with a flash of light, he saw that whatever this evil was, this horror before which his soul had been crouching, he was *free* to defy it, and deny its claim over him. He spoke his emphatic "Get thee behind me, Satan," and thereupon, as he tells us, he began to be a man.

But what to do with his manhood was still the question. He had been studying law and taking a few pupils in mathematics, but his mind was more and more turning towards literature. An engagement as tutor with a family called Buller, gave him more congenial work than he had hitherto had, and left him leisure for study and writing. He wrote and translated scientific articles, and above all, threw himself into the study of German literature. His

acquaintance with English writers was already wide and deep, but none of these had so directly influenced his thought as had such men as Richter and Goethe. Modern German authors were still little known in England, and were generally spoken of contemptuously—though, perhaps, with only a vague meaning attached to the words—as Mystics. To Carlyle their work seemed more founded on reality than any recent English Literature. It may be fitting to quote here from his essay on this subject some words which throw light on the high ideal of the calling of a literary man he found amongst the Germans, and by which he himself took his stand. “There is a *Divine Idea* pervading the visible Universe, which visible Universe is indeed but its symbol and sensible manifestation. To the mass of men, this idea lies hidden, yet to discern it, seize it, and live wholly in it, is the condition of all genuine virtue, knowledge, freedom, and the end therefore of all spiritual effort in every age. Literary men are appointed a priesthood of this Divine Idea, a perpetual priesthood, we might say, standing forth, generation after generation, as the dispensers and living types of God’s everlasting wisdom, to show it in their writings and actions, in such particular form as their own particular times require. For each age is different from every other age, and each demands a different interpretation of the Divine idea, the essence of which is the same in all.”

We shall see how faithful Carlyle remained to this ideal, and with what steady self-denial he repelled

all temptation to lower it. The immediate outcome of his German studies was a life of Schiller, published anonymously, and which seems to have given little satisfaction to himself, and a translation of Goethe's "*Wilhelm Meister*." He sent a copy of both books to the old poet at Weimar, and was rewarded by a letter which began an intercourse that lasted till Goethe's death. Goethe, indeed, was one of the first to recognize in Carlyle not only a clever writer, but a great moral force which in the end must make itself felt.

The sojourn with the Bullers was of benefit to him in many ways. He was enabled to help his own family, as he was always eager to do, and he was introduced to a society from which, in spite of his scornful comments on it, he learned much that was useful to him. But he was impatient to be wholly his own master, partly because he was, as he says, "a skinless creature" suffering from ill-health which made him nervous and irritable, partly because he felt he must be freer for working out into clearness the conceptions fermenting in his brain.

"I have books to write, and things to say in this world," he writes to his mother, "which few wot of."

Another circumstance, too, was now making the problem of his daily life more difficult, if also more interesting to him. Already, before his connection with the Bullers, there was, he tells us, "one happy island in his forlorn, dreary existence," and of course there was a Miranda in it. Jane Welsh, when she and Carlyle first met, was a bright, beautiful girl of

twenty-one, conscious of unusual powers, and full of literary ambitions. She was of a decided, courageous temper, capable of devoted love, capable too, of bitterness, when wounded, and, alas! as *skinless* as Carlyle himself. "This paradox of a woman," her friend Mrs. Oliphant calls her, "full of intolerance and patience, of kindness, irritability, quick anger, love, enthusiasm, cynicism." Theirs was a long, strange wooing, and the love-letters on both sides contained some very hard, unpalatable sayings. Carlyle made it very plain that he had no intention of conquering fortune that he might have wealth and position to lay at his lady's feet. He had chosen his lot—to deliver himself of his message to his fellowmen, regardless of popularity—and he knew that for such work the day's wages are usually small. He would not change his aims even for the woman he loved; if she could not tread this hard way with him, it would be better to part. It was no small sacrifice he asked from one whose present surroundings and possible future were as bright as Jane Welsh's, and she did not conceal that she thought the conditions hard, but to part with him would have been harder still. At last she was won, and in spite of all Mr. Froude's inferences and conclusions, I think she was fully won. They were married in 1826 and settled in Edinburgh, Carlyle, after many plans for bread-winning rejected and entertained, being now fully committed to a literary life.

The subject of the domestic happiness or unhappiness of the Carlyles has been discussed *ad nauseam*. Carlyle, was, no doubt, irritable, and it cannot be

denied that in his devotion to his own high aims, he was too apt to forget that his wife's nature needed room for development as well as his own. No doubt they sometimes made each other unhappy, but that their married life was one long tragic disappointment is, I think, a fiction which we owe to the fertile and ingenious brain of Mr. Froude.

In Edinburgh, Carlyle was at last beginning to be known as a man who might make his mark, and his wife's social charm soon attracted round them a small circle of appreciative friends. Of these the most notable and one of the most intimate, was Jeffrey, the "Arch-critic" himself. His friendship was immediately serviceable to Carlyle in admitting his articles to the *Edinburgh Review*, and he made earnest, but unsuccessful efforts to secure for him a chair in the University of London, and afterwards of St. Andrews. It was about that time Carlyle began to write a novel — never finished — which was recently published and his friends are now allowing to appear under the name of Wotton Rheinfried. The life in Edinburgh, however, was found to be too expensive to be kept up on the slender available resources, and Carlyle found the social interruptions irksome; so nothing better offering, the young couple went to live for seven long, lonely years on a property in Dumfriesshire, belonging to Mrs. Carlyle — a solitary moorland house, "gaunt and hungry-looking," called Craigenputtock. How solitary it was may be gathered from the fact, that once at least, three months passed without any stranger, not even a beggar, having stopped at the door.

In this lonely dwelling Carlyle settled down to think and work, while his wife bravely did her part in creating a habitable home under very unpromising circumstances. The chief literary work continued to be essays for the Edinburgh and Foreign Reviews. One on Burns may be specially noted. Byron's popularity was still exercising a strong influence on literary taste, but Carlyle found in his own countryman a far truer standard of what is essential to poetry. He judged them as he judged all men and all books, by their truth to Nature, to the eternal *fact of things*, as his favourite phrase was, and found in Burns one who knew and loved the Real so well that he found in it the Ideal. Byron, we know, sought the reputation of originality by pouring scorn on all things, even the highest. Burns laid the foundation of more enduring fame by his love for all things, even the humblest. "A true-poet soul," says Carlyle, "for it needs but to be struck, and the sound it yields will be music."

The monotony at Craigenputtock was relieved more than once by a visit from the Jeffreys, the Duke, as they affectionately called the critic, making the little drawing-room a very "Temple of the Muses" with his mimicries and brilliant talk. But in serious consultations things did not go on so well. Jeffrey, anxious to see his friends in better circumstances, tried to persuade Carlyle to throw in his lot with the Whigs, and champion their measures. On such terms even the editorship of the Review might be open to him on Jeffrey's retirement. But Carlyle, who never wrote a sentence that he did not

believe, thought the Whig reforms superficial, and could not and would not bind himself to do partisan work. Jeffrey scoffed at him as being "dreadfully in earnest." The two men indeed were too different to work together, but to Jeffrey's honor, it must be told, that in spite of what he considered his friend's obstinacy, he begged him to accept an annuity of £100 till better days should come. To this Carlyle returned "the meekest, friendliest, most emphatic" refusal. There was no more to be said — the old affection remained, but each went his own way. How hard a way Carlyle's was, we know from one of his letters to his brother in which he speaks of having only £5 with which to front the world.

An entry in Carlyle's diary, in the year 1829, records: "Written a strange piece on Clothes. Know not what will come of it." "I have a book in me," he says again, "that will cause ears to tingle, and one day it must and will out."

At last, not without sore travail, it was written, this wonderful spiritual autobiography, which he called *Sartor Resartus*, i. e., the Tailor Out-Tailored. Many confessions of the inner life of great men have been given to the world — Augustine's, Bunyan's, Rousseau's, but surely never any in so odd a garb as this. With a whimsical reticence he hides himself under the double disguise of an editor giving to the British public the *Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdröckh*, professor of Things in General in the University of *Weissnichtwo*. *Teufelsdröckh* is the embodiment and exponent of his philosophy, but in the editorial notes he has the advantage of antici-

pating and overthrowing, with sometimes almost grotesque humor, the objections and oppositions of a Philistine public. The incidents of the professor's story are some of them from Carlyle's own life, translated, as it were, into German; but they are mainly symbolical. He sketches the mysterious circumstances of his birth, the lonely childhood and youth of the boy who "was like no other," his ineffectual struggles to bring his inner capabilities and his outward circumstances into harmony, and his "obstinate questionings" of the unintelligible world he found himself in. Then comes the Romance Chapter, when for a time Love seemed the Solution of all things, the reconciliation of the Actual and the Ideal, and a sufficient reason for existence. True, and yet not true. For Teufelsdröckh as yet Love meant only Blumine, and when she was denied to him, all the lights of heaven were blotted out, and he was again a wanderer in an endless wilderness, urged by continual unrest, trying to escape from himself, and demanding of destiny with added bitterness why he had been created at all. Was the Universe the Devil's then? was the tempter's hideous suggestion. The turning-point of his history was in the reply, "My whole *Me*," he says, "stood up in God-created Majesty and made answer: I am not thine, but am free, and forever hate thee." Slowly and by manifold experiences, he was led higher. Nature was no longer dead, but the garment of God; human griefs and troubles, to know of, which had before only maddened him, became for him a Sanctuary of Sorrow where he could

worship the Highest. "I see a glimpse of it," he cries; "there is in man a higher than love of happiness—he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find blessedness. Love not pleasure, love God. His is the Everlasting Yea wherein all contradictions are solved."

This, then, is the professor's sole creed. It is God's world, and each man has to find out what work God has appointed him in it, and *do* it. But while he is living on and for the Eternal, he has to adjust himself to what is passing, and try to estimate the value and proportions of the Visible world around him. It is for this end that he sets himself to think out his strange philosophy of Clothes.

Whatsoever sensibly exists, our professor teaches, whatsoever represents spirit to spirit is properly a *clothing*, a suit of raiment, put on for a season, and to be laid off," and "the beginning of all wisdom is to look fixedly on Clothes till they become *transparent*. Taking this idea as our guiding line, we gradually come to see through the (at first sight) apparently chaotic utterances of Teufelsdröckh, whither he is leading us. Language is the garment of thought. Government, the clothing of men's ideas of their relations to each other, and religion itself, the vesture of their deeper thought on duty and destiny. If this be recognized and if we once for all acknowledge that *clothing wears out*, we shall be less dismayed at the changes and decay we see around us, even in what seems the very stronghold of truth. Language alters from day to day, governments that no longer fit the needs of a nation

must be thrown aside, or forcibly rent asunder, and “if the thoughts of men are widening with the process of the suns” in religion too, there must be changed symbols for changed ideals. Yet such symbols, though passing in their nature, are necessary, and their connection with what they express is not arbitrary. As old forms decay, under the old the new is always being formed. Revolution may shake the whole fabric of society, but the truth remains that men are brothers, and in some way it will find expression, new institutions, new laws rising out of the very ashes of the old. So with all truth. It can reach our finite understanding only through its time-garment, or symbol; for, says our professor, in the symbol, “the Infinite is made to blend with the finite, to stand visible, and, as it were, attainable there.

I have given a meager outline of some of the leading thoughts in *Sartor*, but it is a book which defies any attempt to give a resumé of it. There is no orderly plan in the presentation of the thought, but the book is a picture of the writer’s mind, and we have in it the confusion of doubts, the fermentation, the agonizing upheaval in which these seed-thoughts came to life. There is no logical consequent argument, but rather those visions and glimpses that come to a man when his thought has carried him to its utmost limit. Such thought oftenest expresses itself in poetry, but Carlyle had not the gift of verse, and his matter had to create for itself a manner consonant with it.

In describing Teufelsdröckh’s style, Carlyle criticises his own: “Striving with characteristic vehe-

mence to paint this picture and the other, and ever without success, he at last desperately dashes his sponge full of all colours, against the canvas, to try whether it will paint foam." The metaphor is an apt one. It is when the river is forced into a narrow channel that the water surges and boils, and the abrupt vehemence of Carlyle's style leaves with us an impression of his chafing against the limits of language, his impatience with the inadequacy of all words to express the deepest thought. Yet the lesson of the whole is not vague. The Eternal is in the Present, has been in all ages the burden of the prophet's message to men wrapped up in the things of Time, and he that had ears to hear, heard it again in Sartor Resartus.

"It is a work of genius, dear," said Mrs. Carlyle — and she was no flattering critic — when her husband finished reading to her the MS. of Sartor. But we all know that works of genius are not always the most salable articles, and when he set off to London to find a publisher, it was only to meet with refusal after refusal. No one would take the risk of printing a book so totally unlike what the public was accustomed to. Carlyle during this visit saw a good deal of literary society, but found little refreshment or comfort in it. He had had hopes of spiritual guidance from Coleridge, but on closer acquaintance, thought him "weak and ineffectual," and everywhere in society "gigmanity," as he scornfully called the worship of respectability, was rampant. As always, it filled him with a sort of rage mingled with remorse. "Oh, my dear

Jeannie," he writes to his wife, "do help me to be a little more merciful to all men, even gigmen." Amongst his new acquaintances, John Stuart Mill attracted him most, but in all London he could still find no nobler man than Irving, and poor Irving was drifting further and further apart from him, carried away by the crowd of miracle workers and speakers of strange tongues.

This visit to the capital was chiefly memorable to him from the death of his father while he was there. Carlyle had small patience for everyday annoyances, but in the real troubles of life his bearing was always noble. The stern spirit of father and son had grown closer to each other as the years went on, and the blow was a crushing one to him, but he braced himself to learn the lesson of his father's life — honesty, thoroughness, independence. "I will write my books," he says, "as my father built his bridges." His letters to his mother at this time are very tender and beautiful. He refused to take any part of the few hundred pounds to be divided in the family, as he had received a better education than his brothers and sisters. Yet he was still a very poor man. "In the spirit of my father," he says, speaking of his difficulties, "I will front them, and conquer them."

Sartor came back, unprinted, with its author to Craigenputtock, but after some time was published in parts in Fraser's Magazine. Some minds are curiously irritated by what they do not understand, and Fraser received several letters from subscribers threatening to give up the magazine if such articles

were allowed to appear. Two solitary instances of appreciative recognition were known to him — one came from a Roman Catholic priest in Cork, the other from Emerson.

For some time after his return from London, he had work for the Reviews, but the ill-success of Sartor frightened the editors, and that, too, began to fail him. He spent a winter in Edinburgh, where he made one more unsuccessful effort to obtain a chair in the University, but he did not find himself in the right place there. The Whig element in the Scottish capital was strong, and the politicians of the Reform Bill had hoped to find in him a powerful ally, but closer acquaintance only made the breach between them wider. He found in them men of measures rather than of principles, and saw that there could be no bond between their "Whiggism and Opinion," and his "Radicalism and Belief." It was not in Carlyle's nature to coöperate with men with whom his agreement was not fundamental. Politics, indeed, never could have furnished a field for his activity, for compromise was impossible to him. It was the Dynamics, as Professor Masson says, not the Mechanics of Humanity, that he was versed in. No man had a keener eye for the forces which move society, but skill in the adjustments of the machine of government to these forces was not given him.

He left Edinburgh and went back again to the moors and his meditations, but he could not settle. Solitude had done much for him, but it was only a preparation. He needed books, and above all, he

needed contact with men. A sudden resolve was made. Carlyle went to London — the march of men on the street was music to him, he said — and took the house in 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea, which was to be his home to the end, more than 40 years after. Very soon his wife joined him. One little incident of the Craigenputtock life, however, must be noted before we shift the scene to London. In Carlyle's diary of August, 1833, one day is marked with the entry: Ralph Waldo Emerson. This was the beginning of a long friendship, and perhaps, except Goethe, there was no contemporary Carlyle venerated more than Emerson. "He is one of the most lovable creatures we ever looked on," he wrote to his mother of the young American. Two remarks made by Emerson show how, at this time, he understood the man, who was to write the French Revolution and the Hero Worship. "He was honest and true, and cognizant of the subtle links that bind ages together, and saw how every event affects all the future." And again, "He worships any man that will manifest a truth to him." With great differences of character and opinion, there were also strong sympathies between the New Englander and the Scotchman. "A tranquil, high sailing, fair-weather cloud is Emerson, and a massive, heavy storm cloud is Carlyle," says John Burroughs, contrasting the two. Carlyle's words of wisdom are never so perfected, so distilled into precious flawless drops as Emerson's, yet, because what he has given us seems to have cost him more — more struggle with himself and his destiny — it touches us more

nearly. Perhaps the two together have done more than any other to save thinking minds in our time from the materialism, which the half-understood advances of science have developed.

Even before Carlyle went to London it became clear to him that his strength must not be wasted in magazine articles, but that another *book* must be written. In Sartor he has pictured the struggles of the individual man to set himself right with the eternal fact of things; he had now to speak of *society* and its relations to the laws of the universe. To him all history was a Bible, written full of instances of God's blessing on just and truthful action, and His unfailing, though often tardy, vengeance on hollowness and injustice. Nowhere is the lesson written in larger or more unmistakable characters than in the French Revolution. "I could scarcely have kept my faith in a God," says Carlyle somewhere, "if it had not been for the French Revolution." His thoughts on this subject began to take shape. The process was always with him one of effort and pain. "The new chapter of my history," he writes to his brother, "as yet lies all too confused; I look round on innumerable fluctuating masses; can begin to build no edifice for them. My mind would so fain deliver itself adequately of that Divine idea of the world, and only in quite inadequate approximation is such deliverance possible."

His deliverance was certainly unlike any other writings of history, from the monkish chronicles of olden times downwards to the philosophical treatises of the 19th century; yet the best of all kinds is in

it. Facts, minutest details even, are painted in the most vivid colors, and philosophy is not wanting, but the reader will not find it in cut and dry sentences, ready for quotation ; it is in and behind the presentation of facts, held, as it were, in solution by them. The dignity of history is nothing to him, its seriousness is everything. We cannot read this history calmly as a thing altogether of the past. Scene after scene is made present to us, and we are forced to live through them, hoping and fearing with the actors in them, yet horror-struck that they do not see as we do, whither they are being hurried. We see the court, busy with its ceremonies, thinking the world must go on as it has always done, and we come to know at close quarters the hungry, restless multitude, in whose eyes a new light is shining, for the new idea has been born in them that the world need *not* go on as hitherto. We hear the crash of the bastille when the people first feel within themselves the force to make the new era of their desires, and we can scarcely help hoping with the Assembly, in its first flush of strength, that Liberty, Equality and Fraternity are really at hand. Then, as passions are let loose, we feel the darkening of these hopes, and are hurried on through all the wild horrors of the Tribunals, the Guillotine, and the Massacres. No detail of circumstance, speech, look or clothing is too trivial to be recorded, but we seem to have forced on us a sort of Teufelsdröckh vision which grasps their significance, and looks through them to the spiritual forces behind. For our guide never forgets that it is the history of men and women

that he is writing. "Masses indeed," he exclaims, "the masses consist all of units, every unit of whom has his own heart and sorrows." He finds a kinship with the wild-eyed, dishevelled *tricoteuse*, and, none the less, his voice takes on a touch of tenderness whenever he speaks of Marie Antoinette. To him every human being is a miracle and a mystery. "There are depths in man," we quote him again, "that go the lengths of lowest Hell, as there are heights that reach the highest Heaven, for are not both Heaven and Hell made out of him?" It is nothing less than the action of these elemental forces in human nature, when the utter breaking up of customs, habits, formulas, all that binds men to the beaten paths, gave them free scope, that is laid bare to us in this wonderful history. The French Revolution is one act of a drama that is not yet played out, and the strong light of Carlyle's genius by which we see it, makes us feel more than ever that we cannot fully explain it or tabulate its causes and effects, but we close the book, feeling that two lessons at least have been well driven home, and that any injustice, any lie against Nature, cannot last forever, but will bring with it in the end its own judgment, and that whoever will amend society must first begin with himself.

"The book," Carlyle wrote to his friend Sterling, "came not out of my own soul, born of blackness, whirlwind and sorrow," and this time his words did find ready response in the minds of thinking men. The book gave him at once a place in the ranks of the foremost men of his time. The work had been

an exhausting one, all the worse from his having the first volume not only to write, but to think and *feel* over again a second time. He had lent the MS. to Stuart Mill, who, by some carelessness, allowed it to be thrown into the fire. Carlyle's first words to his wife, when Mill left, after his painful confession, were: "Poor fellow, he is terribly cut up. We must endeavor to hide from him how very serious this business is to us." We may as well remember this incident when we hear the oft-repeated accusations against him of harshness and selfishness.

He went off to rest in Scotland, to lie about the roots of hedges, his wife said, and speak to no man, woman or child, except in monosyllables, but his empty purse soon admonished him to be up and doing.

His friends, knowing the great force of his personality, had persuaded him to come face to face with the public, and arranged for a course of lectures to be given by him. Three such courses were given at intervals during the next few years—on German Literature, on The General History of Literature, and lastly on Heroes. The second course has been published from notes for the first time in the present year. The last, collected and published as "Hero-Worship," makes up, with Sartor and the French Revolution, the two of Carlyle's most widely read and most influential books.

In reading the French Revolution we constantly feel that it has been written from a point of view with which Sartor has made us familiar. In the

same way the main ideas in the lectures on Heroes have their roots in the French Revolution. Mirabeau and Danton are the two outstanding figures there—the only two to whom Carlyle, in spite of all their faults, does homage. These two alone were men strong enough to bear rule, and they were strong in virtue of their sincerity. While other men were striving to bring in the New with phrases and theories, they alone saw the thing that *was*, and would have built on that, had building been then possible. This sincerity or originality of the whole moral and intellectual nature is the one necessary element in the character of Carlyle's heroes. The man who has genuine insight, who lives in "direct communion with the inner fact of things," "who is himself a portion of the primal reality of things"—this is the man whom in thought and action he would have us follow and obey—for it is in obedience to its heroes that he places the salvation of society.

We have seen how in his essay on German Literature he has spoken of literary men as a perpetual priesthood appointed to interpret to each age in such form as it required, the Divine Idea of the World. Dante, the poet-hero, showed to his age the gulf that separates good and evil by painting the horrors of the Inferno and the glories of Paradise; later, when Northern Europe had thrown off the incubus of priestcraft, Shakespeare, too great to insist on any one side of Truth, reasserted faith in human nature by his creations of men and women so living and true we speak of them as real. But

there are times, too, when the necessary form of truth must be expressed in action rather than words. Luther, therefore, nailing his thesis to the church-door, or burning the papal bull, Cromwell, charging at the head of his Ironsides, Napoleon, even, in the earlier and nobler part of his career, when his genius gave form and created channels for the new-born activity of the French people — these, too, were heroes and interpreters of the Divine Idea.

Noble and heart-searching as these studies on heroes are, I think we find in them the germs of the errors that warped the development of Carlyle's character and genius, and not only saddened but distorted his outlook on the world. His pages are full of fierce and scornful impatience of society as he found it, and his contempt is turned against what are claimed as its virtues even more than its vices. His denunciations are often, perhaps oftenest, only too well-deserved, but in his hasty scorn for sentimental benevolence or "mealy-mouthed philanthropy" he was guilty of overlooking genuine humanity and self-sacrifice. He sometimes passed a hero himself without knowing him. His great error seems to have been a too complete identification of virtue and intellect.

He was right in maintaining that a man's character must be looked on as one and indivisible, altogether right in insisting that greatness is only possible where there is a union of high mental and moral qualities. But he carried his idealification too far: He was too unwilling to see virtue where it was not accompanied by intellectual force; and was

often blinded, alike to the evil in his chosen heroes, and to the good in the masses of humbler men.

His lectures brought him a moderate sum of money and a good deal of fame. The money could not but be welcome, but from the popularity—which had much of the fashionable element in it—he recoiled with a sort of horror. Recognition of the real value of his work was always precious to him, but mere applause he turned from as a temptation, all the more that he felt there was a lower side of his nature to which it appealed. The excitement of delivery was unpleasant to him, and he was anxious to be done with the whole thing as a mixture of “prophecy and play-acting.” Carlyle’s original personality, his strong, earnest voice, with the broad Annandale accent seem to have made a deep impression on the brilliant London audience. Even his difficulty of utterance seems to have made them feel the power of his thought. “Never mind, my dear,” whispered a lady to Mrs. Carlyle, who was anxiously watching him writhing in what she called an agony of incipency, “never mind, they like it.” Of more value to him, however, than their expressions of enthusiasm, was the news that came from over the border of his old mother “greetin”* over the chapters on Luther and Knox.

Of all Carlyle’s great men none was nearer his heart than Oliver Cromwell. He seemed to him the last of the heroes who had by any great effort tried to make God’s kingdom on earth a reality, and he was bent on giving a clear picture of him to his

* Weeping.

own generation. His journal and letters begin to be filled with the groans and lamentations which with him always preceded the bringing forth of a new book. "Oliver is an impossibility to me," he writes in despair. "I am, as it were, without a language. No Cromwell will ever come out of me in this world." He was turned aside from this work, however, by the desire to give some answer to the accusations brought against him that he was needlessly maligning the present time by his indictment of falseness, injustice and greed. The question, "Is the world better now than in the Past? Is man happier, not to say worthier, than he was before our boasted advances of the Modern era?" has been discussed a thousand times. Carlyle felt that his answer must be a sorrowful No. It was to speak his mind on this subject that he wrote the book called Past and Present. He pictured the state of things in Feudal times when each man had distinct claims on society and distinct duties assigned to him by society, when, if there were bonds and restrictions, the poorest were protected and fed, and when the obligations of men to each other were at least in some degree recognized and embodied in the social framework. He contrasted it with our own times, when, if every man has liberty, it is for many at times only liberty to starve. Good government, much more than liberty, was the ideal he set before him. It is of little value, he insists, to have dispossessed bad rulers if we do not make sure that we choose good ones. The system of *laissez-faire*, which at the time he wrote was the doctrine upheld

by the Liberal Statesmen of England, seemed to him a denial of the doctrine of the brotherhood of man, and, as such, doomed.

The difficult question of how far a government has the right to interfere with the individual's liberty, even for his good, cannot be discussed here; but there is no doubt that public sentiment in Great Britain on this subject has greatly changed in the last twenty years, and this is probably very largely owing to Carlyle's influence. The *laissez-faire* system has been to a great extent abandoned, and compulsory education, sanitary, and labor acts, land courts and labor commissions have shown how earnest has been the desire that government should deal with these social problems.

It is noticeable that in Carlyle's hopes for the future it was always to the government that he looked. There were other men in England, who looked first to the Church. With these men he had often strong sympathies, but with the Church as an ecclesiastical organization he would have nothing whatever to do. The truer, wider idea of the church as the body of truly living humanity, united to its great Head, and therefore really in vital connection with the source of all Power, he seems never fairly to have grasped. It was the want of this belief in a living Church, working from within, slowly and surely, as leaven in the mass that made him turn more and more to the idea of a strong government which would compel men into the right way, as the best hope for the nation.

A true account of the Puritan Commonwealth would, he thought, furnish the most forcible ex-

ample of this, and again he set to work on Cromwell. The task seemed to him more necessary, because this chapter of history had been as yet almost universally misread, and the hero of it misunderstood. No efforts to get at original sources of information were too toilsome for him. At last through Cromwell's own letters, journal, and despatches, and contemporary records, he succeeded in conceiving and painting what he really believed — and his conscience was exacting in these matters — to be an authentic portrait of the man. The book is called *Letters and Speeches of Cromwell, with Elucidations*. There was less of his own work in it than in his other books, but he seemed to be more contented with it than he usually was, and to have enjoyed a genuine satisfaction that at last the world had a representation of Cromwell, not as the scheming hypocrite, but as one of the greatest and godliest of men, whose right it was to rule England, because he was the only man fit to do it.

Of course, Carlyle did not advocate a return to the feudalism of the early times (described in *Past and Present*), or the religious despotism of Cromwell. These might be considered an outworn clothing, but in different form he would have applied his ideas on strong government to the questions of his own time. Freedom was to be desired, but unless there was a real spiritual freedom existing in a people, political enfranchisement was worse than useless. In one of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, called "*Nigger Emancipation*," which brought him great unpopularity, he advocates the continuance of slavery on

the ground that the negroes were fit for nothing else. When the American Civil War broke out he took up the same ground, and espoused the cause of the South, though his biographer records that he afterwards admitted to him that perhaps he had not seen to the bottom of that question. It must be confessed that these pamphlets and his later productions generally are marked by an increasing arrogance of tone, and a tendency to push his favorite theories to extremes. The fact is, Carlyle had not altogether escaped the dangers that beset great men. He had been raised to the position of a seer or prophet, listened to with reverent admiration and docility. Too little contradiction is not good for any man.

The Carlyles had now made good their position in the highest literary circle of London. They still lived in the old house at Chelsea. Their life there was almost as simple and frugal as at first, but the pinch of poverty was over. Conventionality was the last thing they could be accused of, but they were just as free from anything like Bohemianism. "Nobody could tell," says Miss Jewsbury, "whether they were rich or poor," so dignified, yet so simple were the arrangements. Mrs. Carlyle's letters have recorded all her difficulties and her triumphs in her little home-kingdom, and, indeed, have made familiar to us all the outs and ins of the everyday life at Cheyne Row. Her power of putting a picture before us is as vivid in its own way as her husband's, and whether she is describing an evening with Tennyson, or only the woes of a washing day, her

story is always worth hearing. We know all about the battles against the "demon-fowl" in the neighboring yard, the building of the sound-proof room, and the thousand and one contrivances to keep noises away from the irascible old philosopher, and the philosopher's overwhelming eloquence when they were not successful. We know the pet names, the family jokes, and the "little language," as Swift calls it, that had grown up between the two from years of common memories. We can trace all the changes of the family barometer, and, alas! all the world knows too well, that it did not always point to "calm" and "set fair." Carlyle's groans and lamentations over his dyspepsia and his sleeplessness, the music of the organ-grinders, and the inefficiency of his tailors were never ending, and now and again drove his wife to desperation. He had his little eruption of superlatives and forgot about it, but the sting of any difference stayed longer with her. But more than enough has been said of this; at the core they were loyal to each other, and at any touch of real trouble the deep tenderness that was always there was ready to show itself. It seems to me one proof of their essential union to each other, that they loved and were loved by the same friends, and that Mrs. Carlyle was always on terms of warm affection with her husband's family. I should like to quote a few words from Mrs. Oliphant, one of these friends. "We confess, for our own part," she writes, "that the manner of mind which can deduce from this long autobiography (the letters) an idea injurious to the perfect union of these two

souls is, to us, incomprehensible. They tormented each other, but not half so much as each tormented him and herself. They were in the fullest sense everything to each other, both good and evil, sole comforters, chief tormentors. "Ill to hae, and waur to want," says the Scotch proverb. Sometimes Carlyle was "ill to have" but it is abundantly evident that he was "waur to want," i. e., worse to do without to his wife. To him, though he wounded her in a hundred small ways, there is no evidence that she was ever anything else than the most desirable of women, understood and acknowledged as the setter right of all things, the providence, and first authority of his life. "I have only him," writes Mrs. Carlyle, herself, to her mother-in-law, "not but that number of people love me more than I deserve, but then his fashion is so different from all these, and seems alone to suit the crotchety creature I am."

There were few people of note in London who were not eager to have the entrée to Cheyne Row. Leigh Hunt was one of their first intimates, Mazzini another of their most valued friends; John Sterling, Froude, John Foster, Dickens, Kingsley, Maurice, Tennyson, came and went. Carlyle often grumbled at the interruptions of visitors, but once drawn into the circle, no one was brighter or more eager to talk. "The imagery, his wild play of humour, the immense knowledge always evident under the grotesque forms it assumed, were so dazzling and entertaining," says Mr. Froude, "that we lost the use of our own faculties till it was over."

There was a curious reaction noticeable in him sometimes after an evening of this kind — a dissatisfaction with himself, as if he thought he was perhaps guilty of “the clatter” his father had taught him to abhor.

Carlyle’s dearest friends were always those of his own family — dearest of all was his mother. He lost her in 1853, and it is very touching to see the orphaned motherless feeling in the gray-haired man, now nearly sixty years of age. “To lose my mother,” he said once, “was the terror of my childhood, and it has followed me ever since.”

To go back once more to his literary work, the *Life of John Sterling* was published in 1851. It was a labor of love, and is written in softer, quieter tones than any of his other books. Sterling had been the best beloved of his disciples, and, though his life had already been written by Archdeacon Hare, Carlyle felt “commissioned” to give what he thought a truer picture of the man. In 1853 he began the most arduous task he had ever undertaken — the *History of Frederic the Great*. Its preparation gave him an immense amount of labor, and so swallowed up his nights and days, his whole thoughts and cares, that, as his wife said, “they lived in the Valley of the Shadow of Frederic.” Two journeys to Germany were made that the verification of his statements might be complete. It cost him thirteen years of hard toil. I feel emboldened after saying this, to confess I have not yet had courage to begin so large a book, and can only quote the opinions of others. Froude thinks it the great-

est of all Carlyle's works, and the best example of his peculiar power as a historian. "To penetrate really into the hearts and souls of men," he says, "to give each his due, to represent him as he appears at his best and not to his enemies, to sympathize in the collision of principles with each party in turn, to feel as they felt, to think as they thought, and to reproduce the various beliefs and acquirements of another age is a task which requires gifts as great or greater than those of the dramatist; all is required of the historian which is required of the dramatist, with the obligation to truth of ascertained fact besides. And this was Carlyle's special gift, to bring dead people and dead things back to life, and show us men and women playing their parts on the mortal stage as real flesh and blood." How much accuracy accompanied Carlyle's imaginative insight is shown by the fact that his accounts of Frederic's battles are prescribed as military studies for German officers.

The book was translated into German and much read. Some years afterwards he received a letter from Prince Bismarck, with the insignia of the order of merit. He was much gratified with this recognition of his work, but could not omit his usual growl when the decoration arrived. "A quarter of a pound of good tobacco would probably have added more to his happiness," he said.

One honor bestowed on him in his later years he very keenly appreciated, and to his wife it meant even more. The rectorship of Edinburgh University—an honorary office—was bestowed on him.

Their life in Edinburgh had been in the days of obscurity and poverty, when Mrs. Carlyle's friends thought she had done a very foolish thing in marrying the son of the plain Annandale farmer. It was very sweet to her now that Edinburgh should prove to them they were wrong by welcoming him as the foremost Scotchman of his time. He went north to make the customary speech to the students, and his reception by the young hero-worshippers and by the city at large was beyond expectation enthusiastic. His address to the young men was a summing up of his whole life's teaching—an exhortation to simplicity, thoroughness, earnestness and reverence. He was puzzled, his biographer tells us, why he was received with such universal acclamations—he was only saying what he had said a hundred times before more forcibly. One feels inclined to suggest that it was exactly because of the absence of the forcible tone. He was moved to a gentle mood by the youthful eagerness of the lads looking up to him for guidance, and said his say without his usual vituperation. Be that as it may, this Edinburgh appearance gave a sudden impulse to his popularity. A new edition of *Sartor*, which 30 years before had been unable to find a publisher, was called for, and 20,000 copies were immediately sold.

Mrs. Carlyle had been in painful anxiety about the effect of the excitement on her husband, now an old man of over seventy, and when the telegram, "a perfect triumph," sent by Professor Tyndall, arrived, there was much rejoicing in Cheyne Row.

“What pleases me most,” she writes, “is the hearty personal affection that comes out on all hands: all that is positively delightful, and makes it a good joy to me.”

Her husband was never to see her again. He turned aside, on his way home, to visit a sister, and there he received the dreadful tidings of her sudden death.

Carlyle lived fifteen years after his wife, but to the end his sense of loss seemed scarcely dulled, or his grief less passionate. He lived over the past again, and morbidly exaggerated every little outburst of temper or want of consideration till his whole life was shadowed with remorse. He compiled the *Reminiscences of her Life*, and collected her letters, annotating them with explanations, and adding little notes, in which he breaks out—poor lonely old man!—into fond, lover-like language over his Jeannie, “his bonny little woman.” “Oh think! if thou yet love anybody living,” he says to us, “wait not till death sweep down the little paltry dust-clouds and idle dissonances of the moment, and all be at last so mournfully and beautifully clear, *when it is too late.*”

There is not very much to record of these last years of feebleness and sorrow. What he did write is sad reading. Literature, Politics, Religion all seemed to him to be building on shifting sands. Literature was frothy, Politics, a following of loud talkers instead of honest doers, while in Religion, he saw little but Materialism, which he dreaded on the one hand, and Cant, still more to be abhorred on the

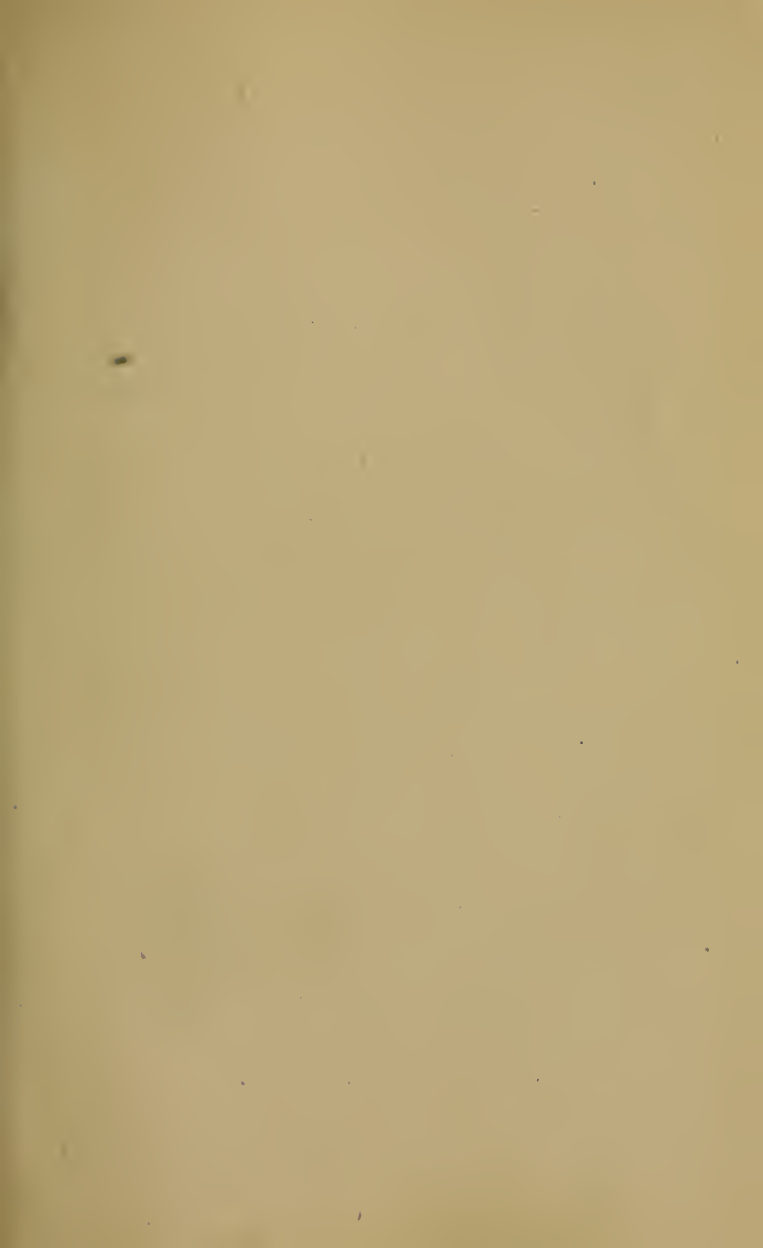
other. It is the old story of the prophet who needed to be reminded that there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bent the knee to Baal. The man who feels himself commissioned, as Carlyle did, to denounce the failings of the times, will, if he be not kept very humble, see nothing but failings. It is pleasant to find, however, that this gloomy humor did not dry up his practical kindness and helpfulness. Hundreds of people — young men very often — applied to him for advice and help. He gave the most painstaking thought to these cases, and was very generous if money could be of any use. There was plenty of money *now*, he said mournfully. Honors, too, came unsought. The Queen offered him a pension and the Grand Cross of the Bath, but both were respectfully refused.

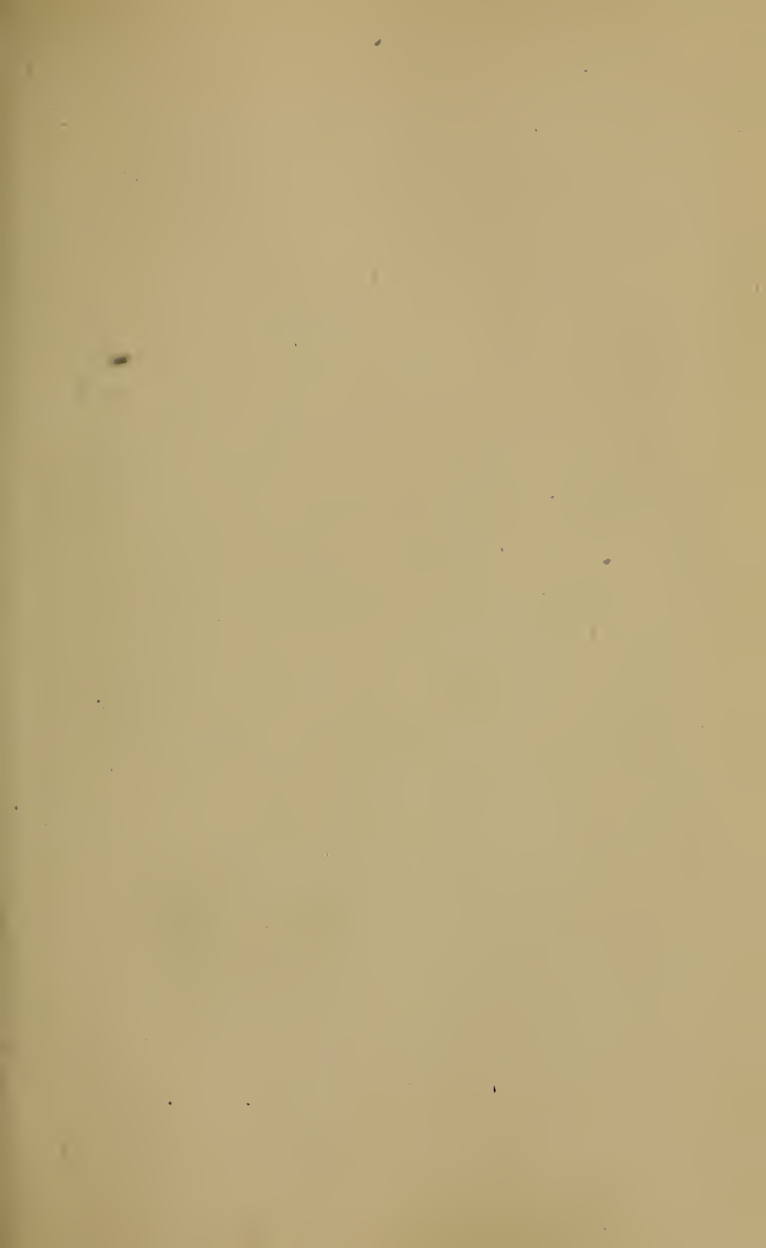
He had many friends, too, who vied with each other in trying to cheer him. He was not ungrateful, but the same feeling came always uppermost in his talk or in writing — the *weary, weary*. At last, the end came. He died on the 5th of February, 1881. Westminster Abbey was offered as a place of burial, as was fitting, and, as was fitting, it was refused. A few days later, he was laid, in utter silence, as the Scotch fashion is, by the side of his father and mother in the green churchyard at Ecclefechan.

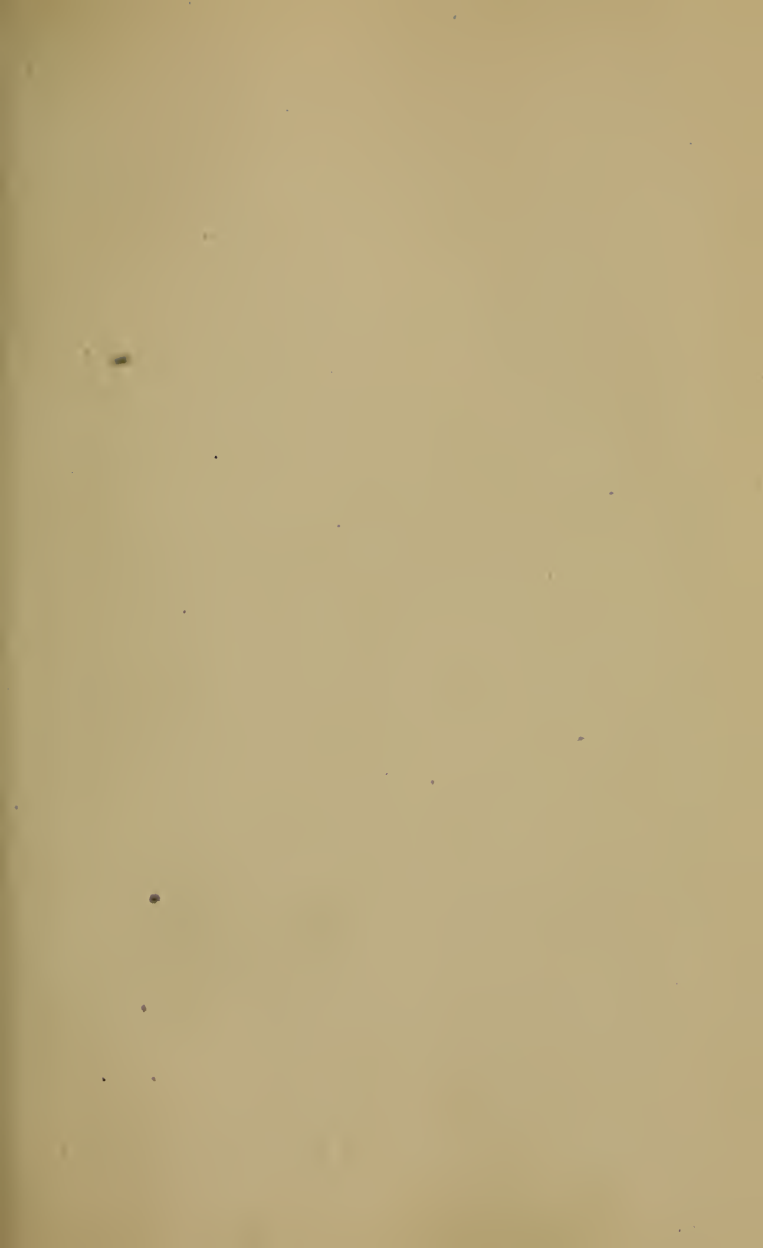
What has he done for us? What do we owe him? What place the literary judgment of another generation will assign him it is too soon to know. His own faculty for literary form he rated very low. He knew he had much to say, that must be said at

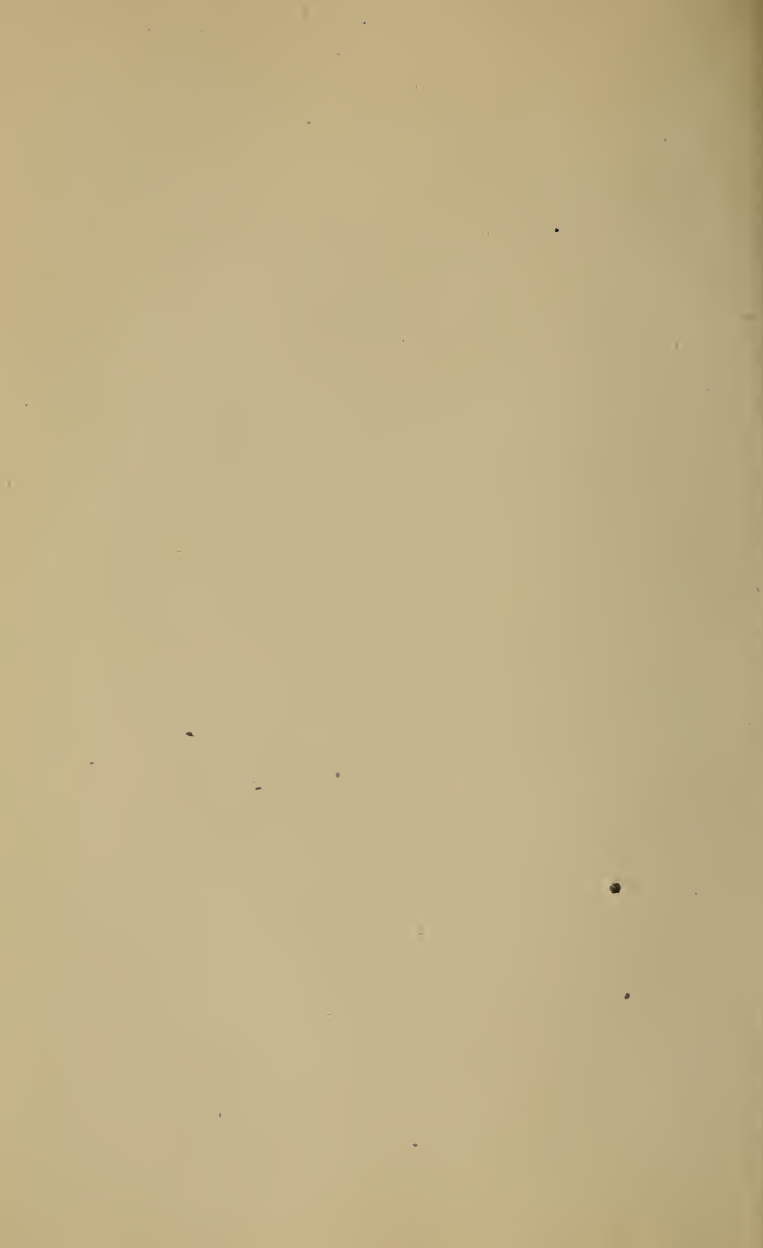
all cost, but his difficulty in expression was often great. It is not, however, the literary student who turns most eagerly to Carlyle. It is the man who wishes to settle the basis of his own life. He was a man of few ideas, it has been said, and indeed in his pages we find the constant reiteration of the same thoughts in different forms. Be real, get to the bottom of things, hold fast what is eternal, work according to your belief, and be sure that a just God will call you to account. This may not be new teaching, but it needed all his burning earnestness, his intense conviction, and the fire of his genius to get a right hearing for it in this nineteenth century of ours. The experience of anyone who follows the course of Carlyle's life and teaching must be a great sadness. It will only satisfy us if we go further. Long ago he had written in *Sartor*: "Yes, to me also was given, if not Victory, yet the consciousness of battle, and the resolve to persevere therein while life or faculty was left." He had a long battle, but to the end we miss the note of Victory. And yet in a sense Victory has been his. All his life Carlyle stood aloof from the church, yet it is there that his influence has been deepest and most lasting. If in the church of to-day there is a greater desire to follow Truth wherever it may lead us — a greater willingness to receive its revelations through whatever channels they may come, a greater dislike to pious conventionality, a stronger dread of speaking what we do not feel, or seeming the thing we are not — we owe it greatly to Thomas Carlyle.

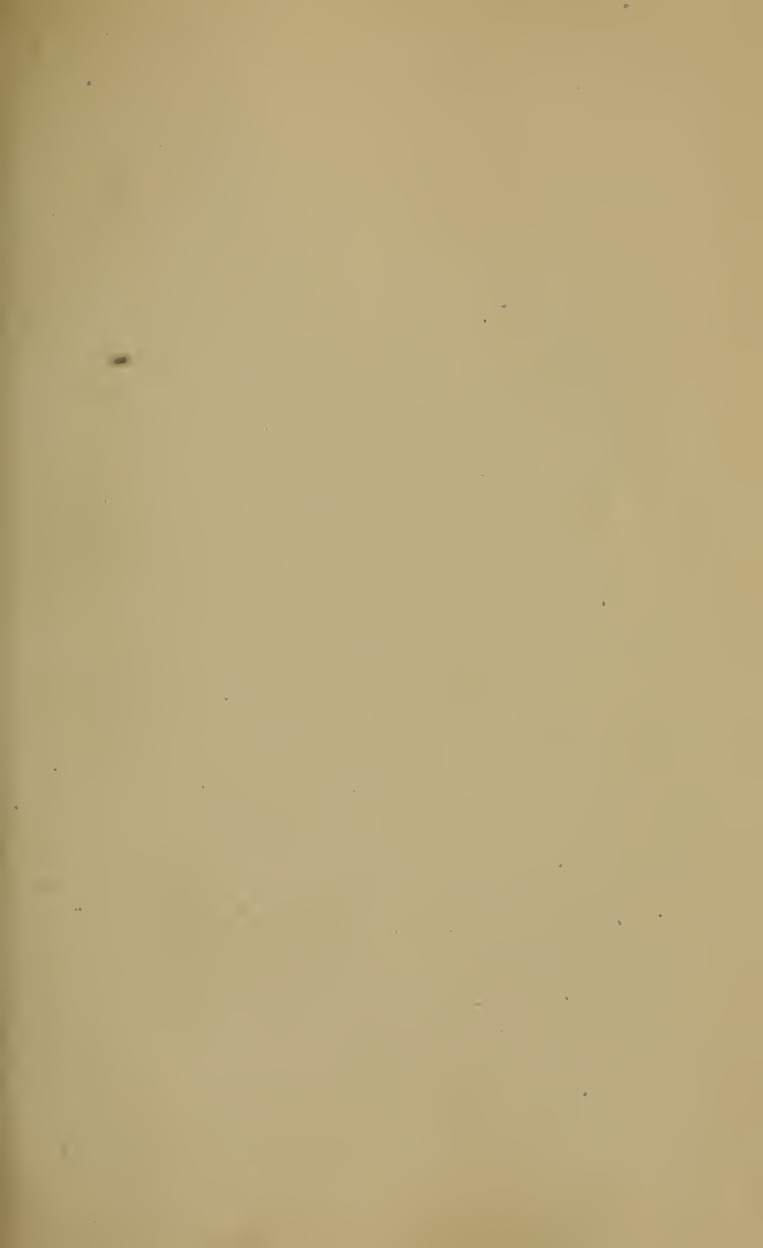
An imperfect man — none knew it better than himself — yet a heroic soul. He, too, was one of the perpetual priesthood, an interpreter of the Divine Idea.

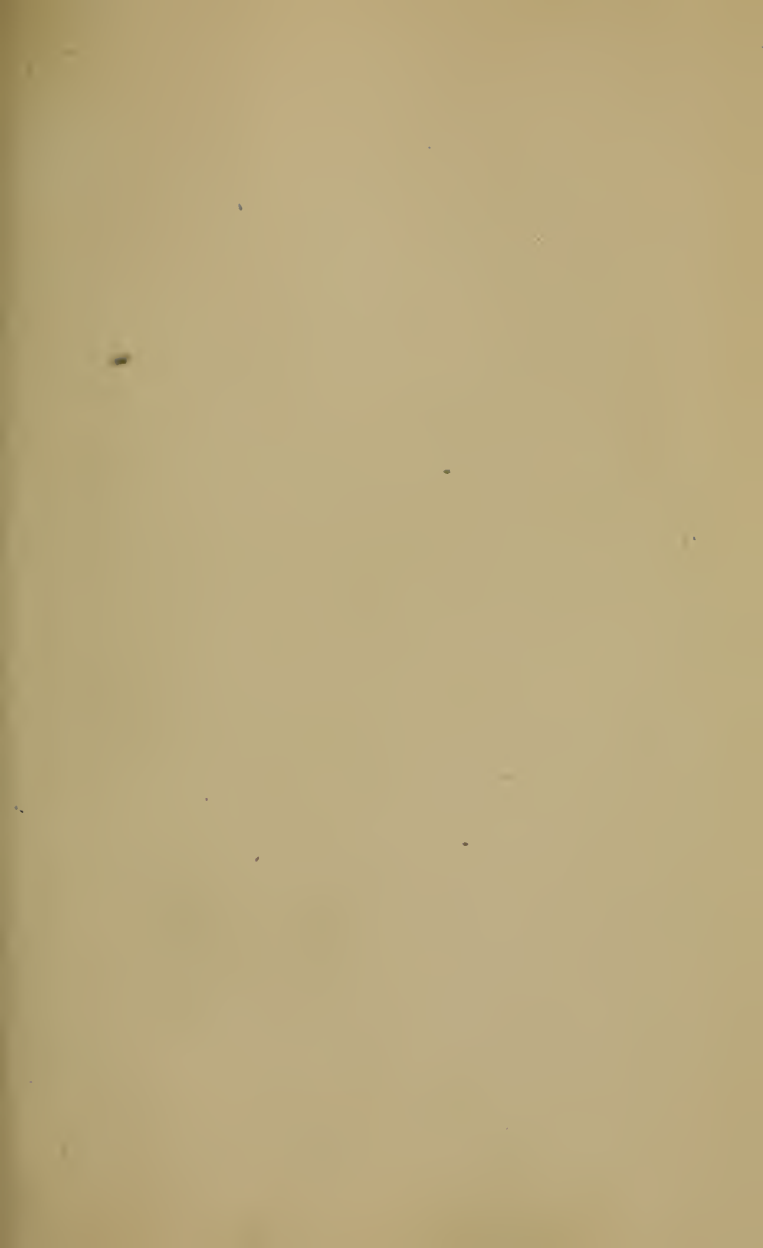


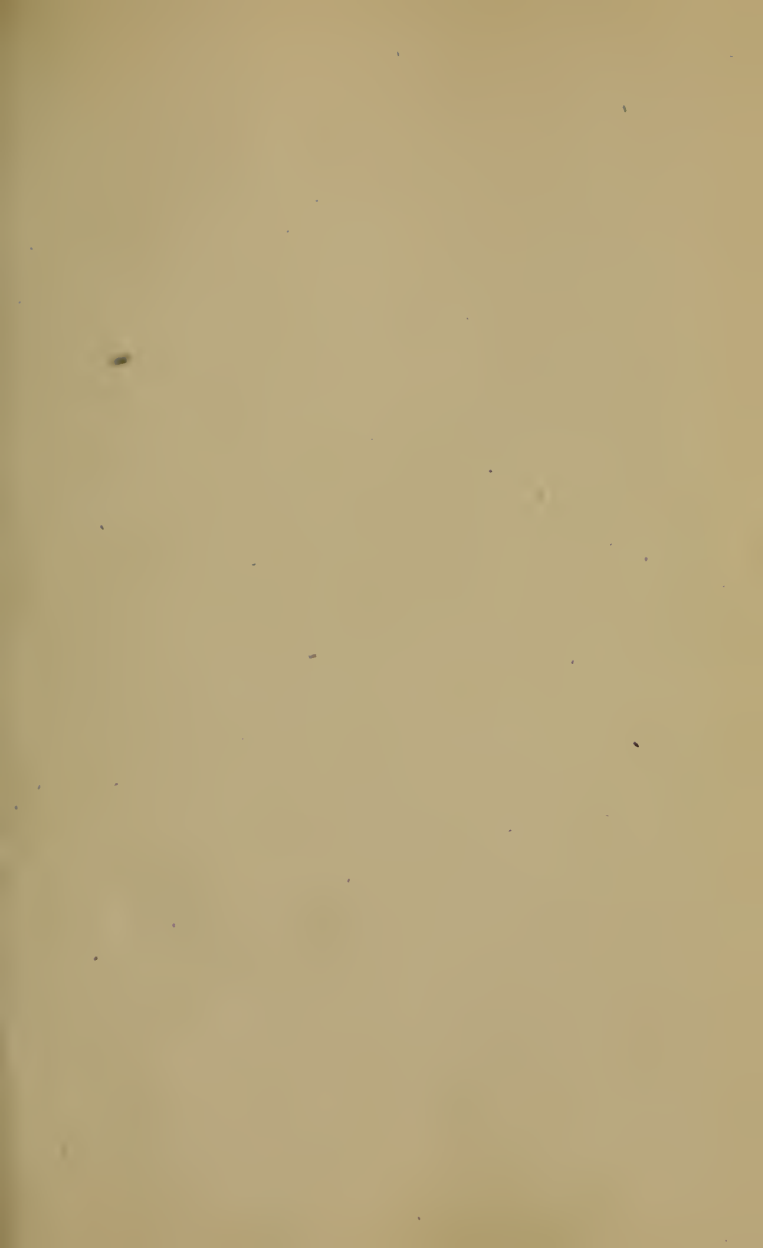


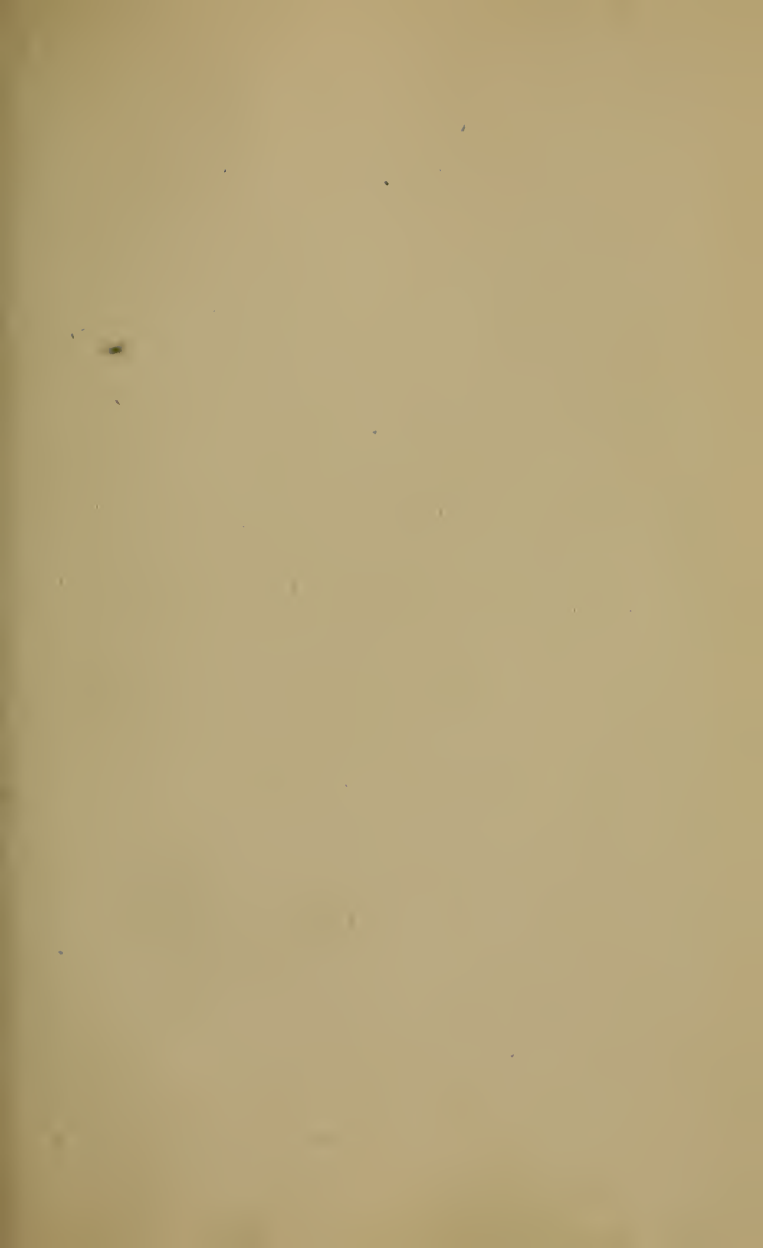


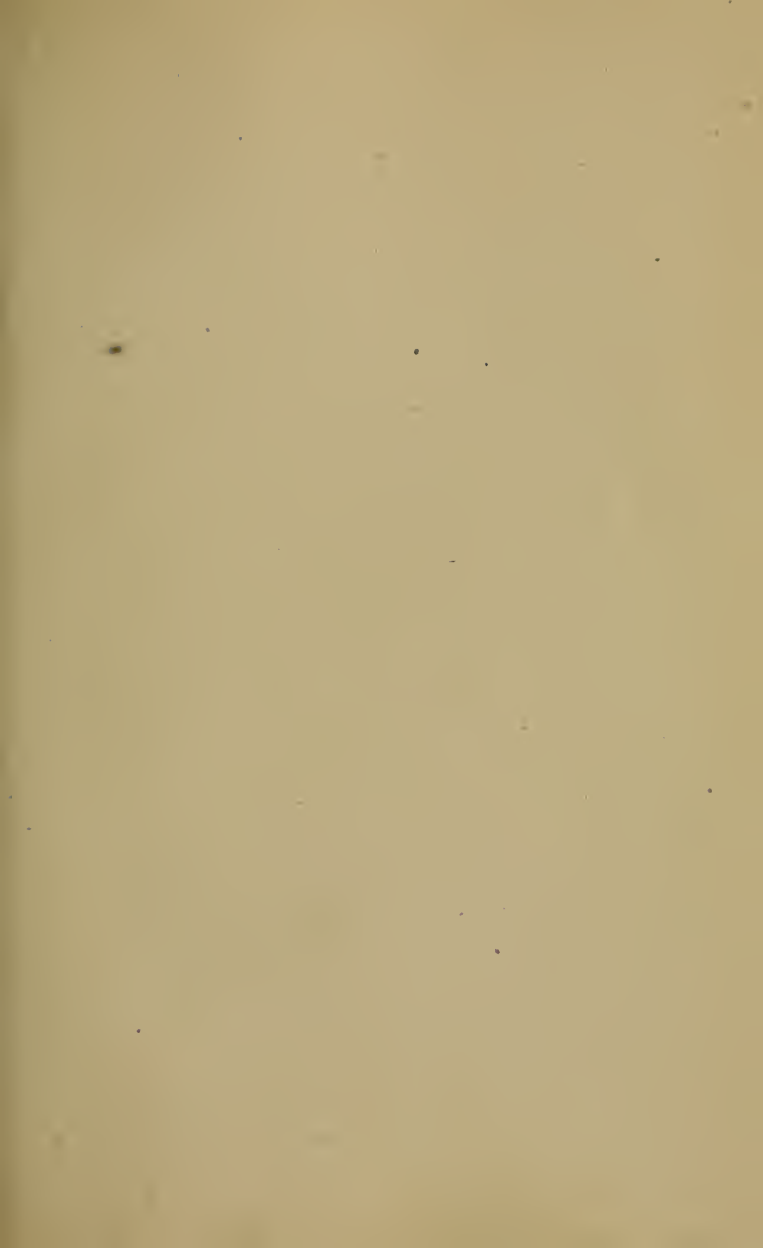


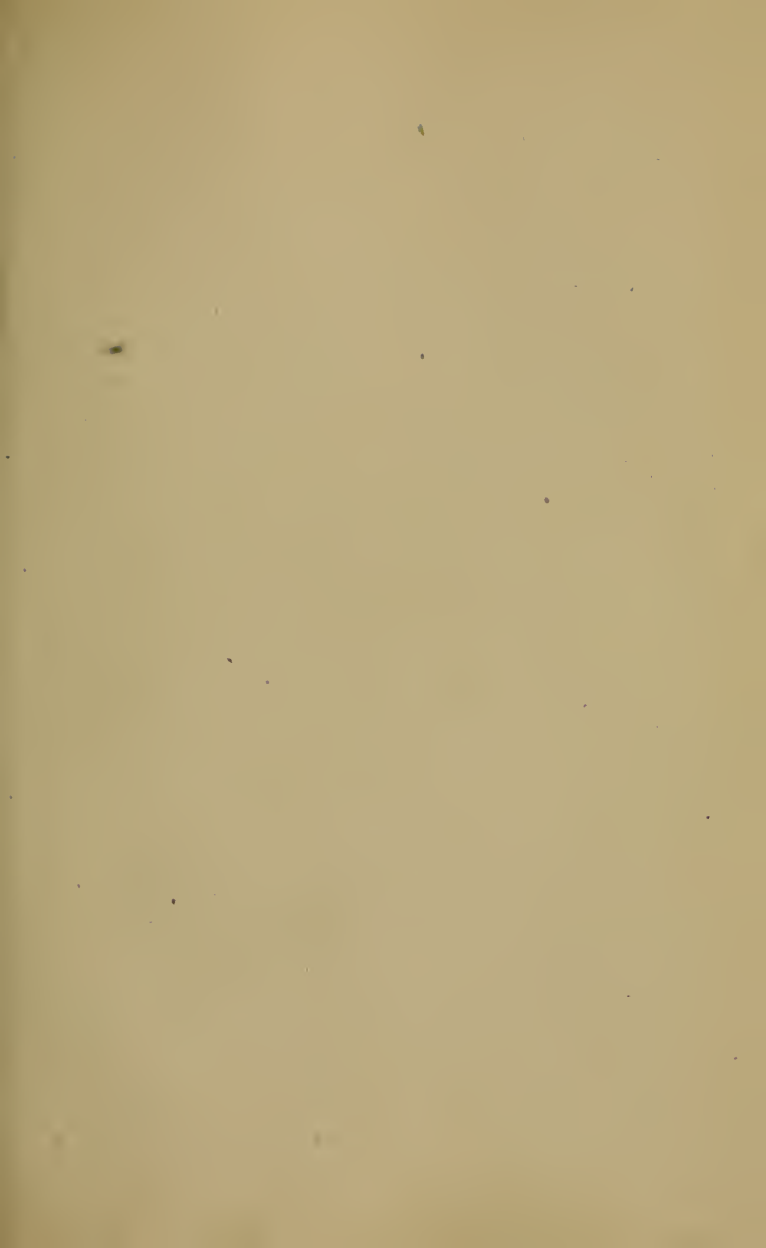


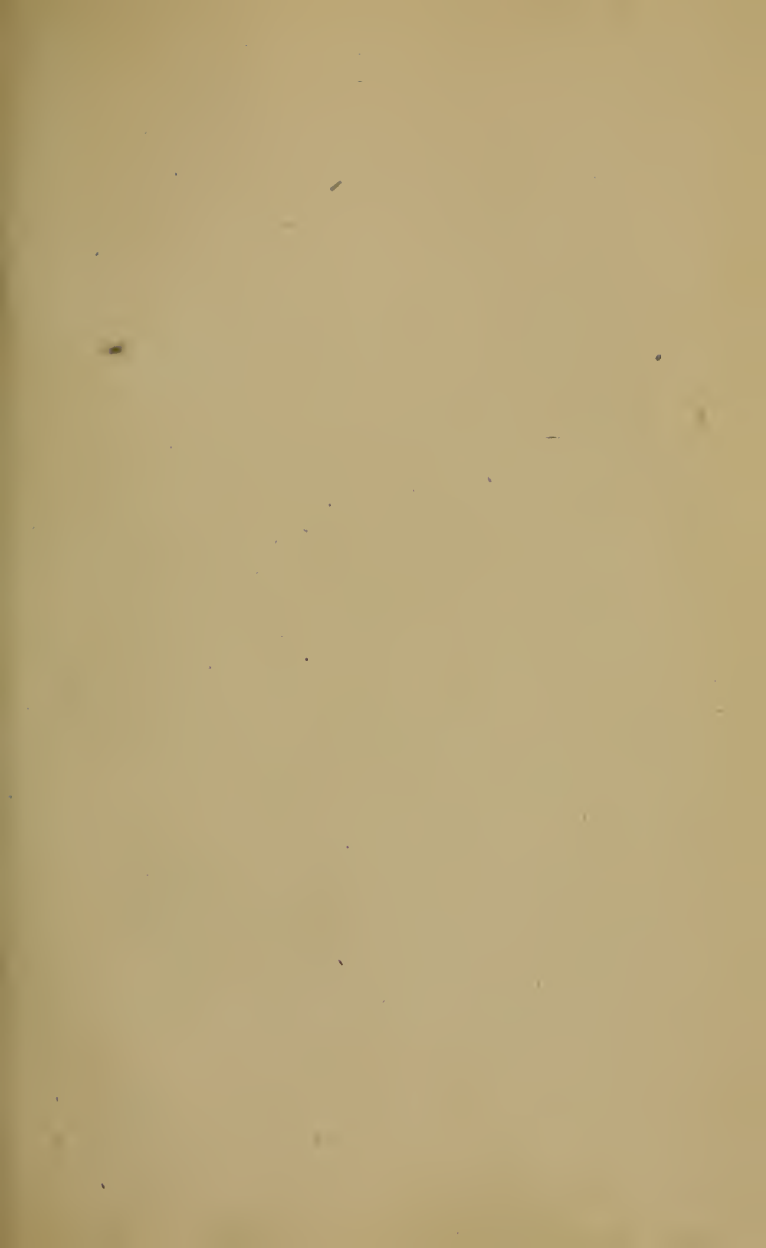


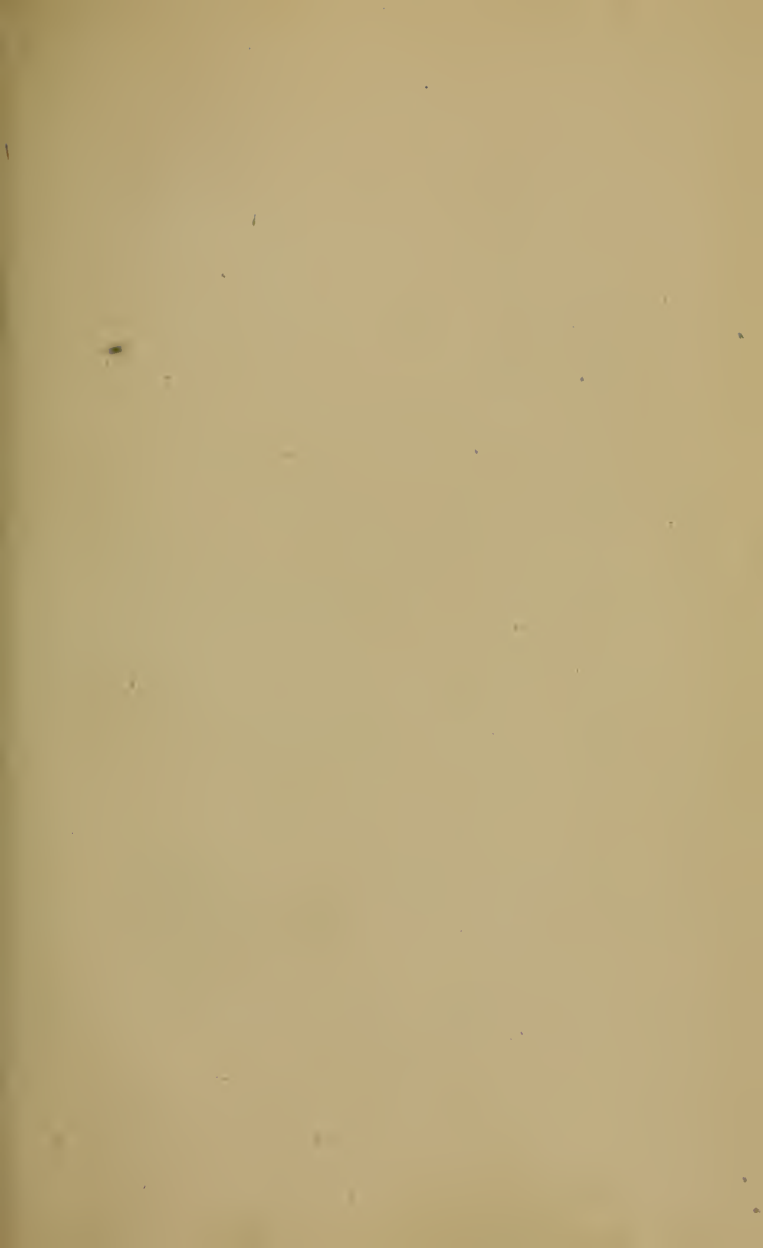


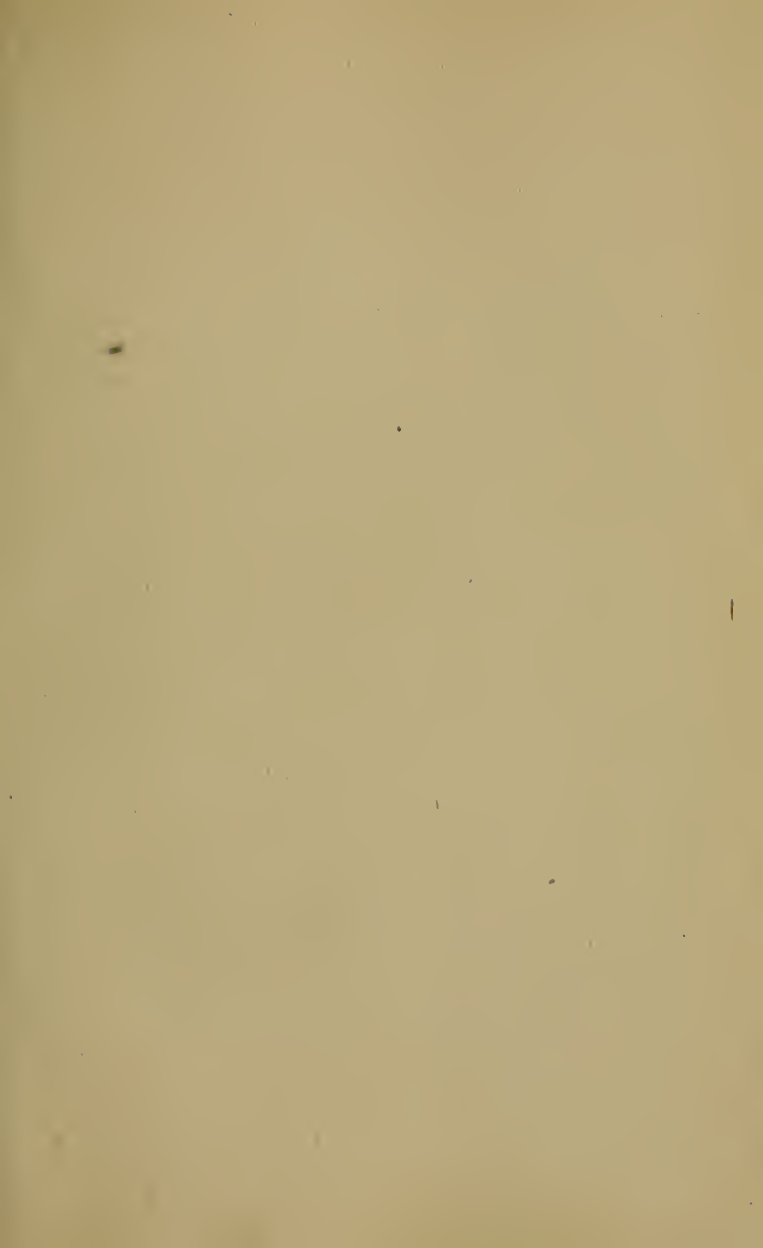






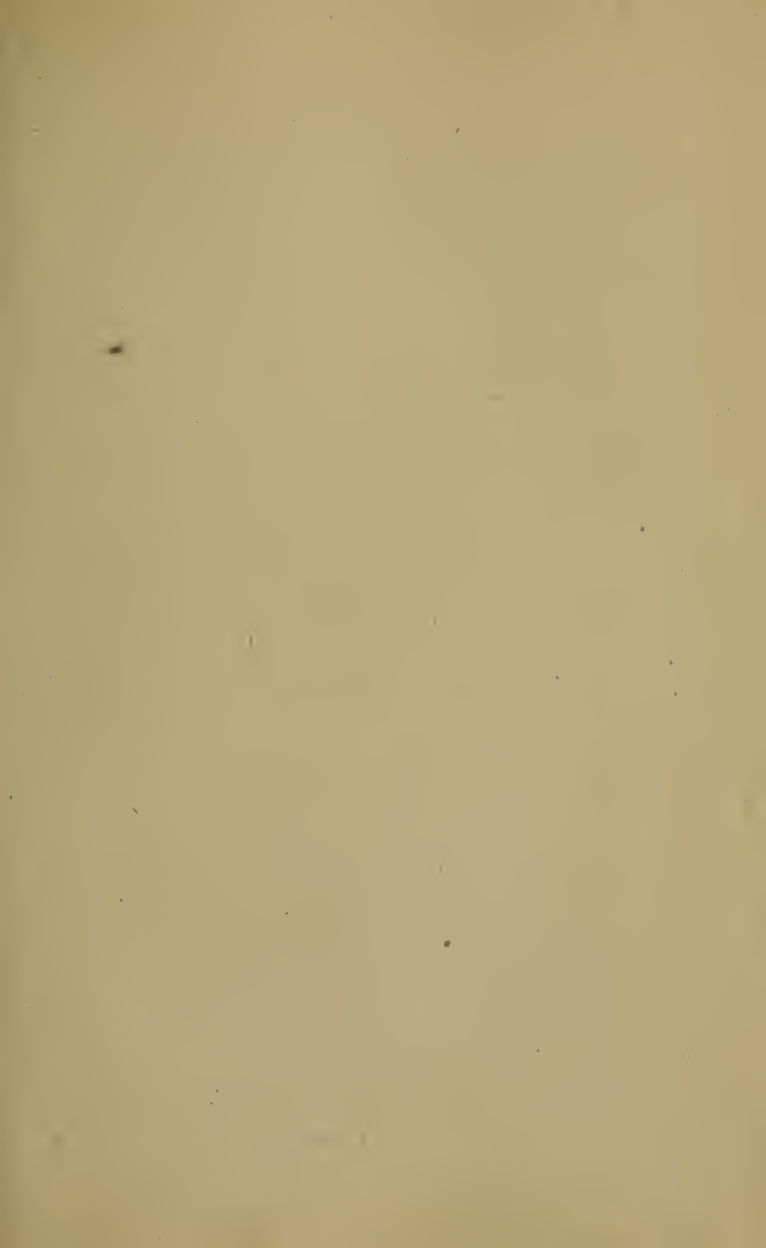




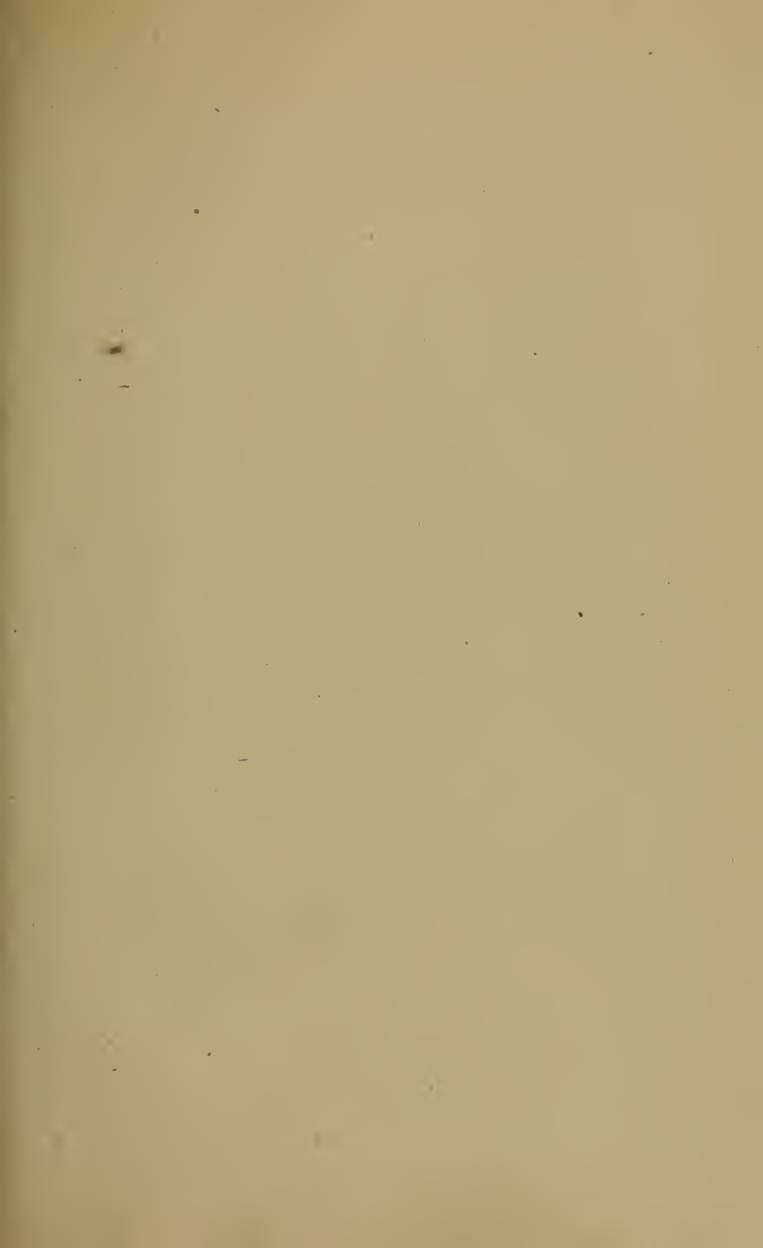


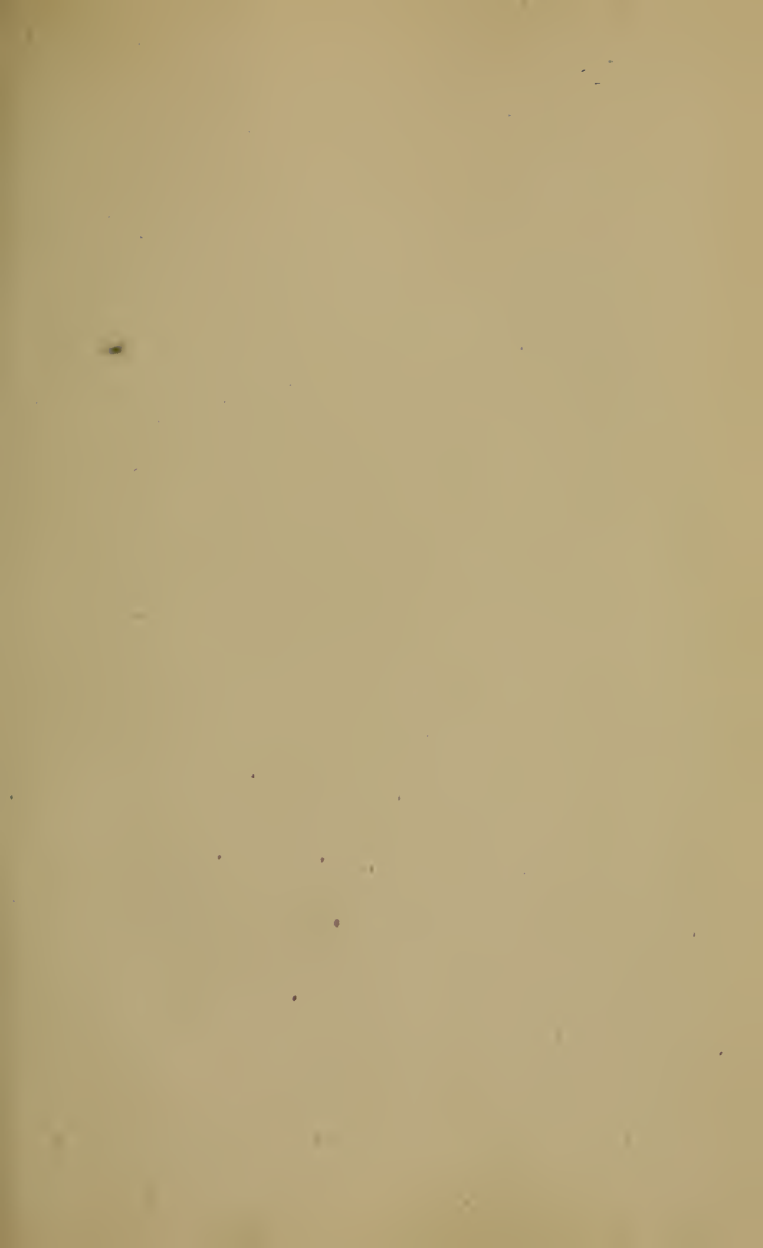


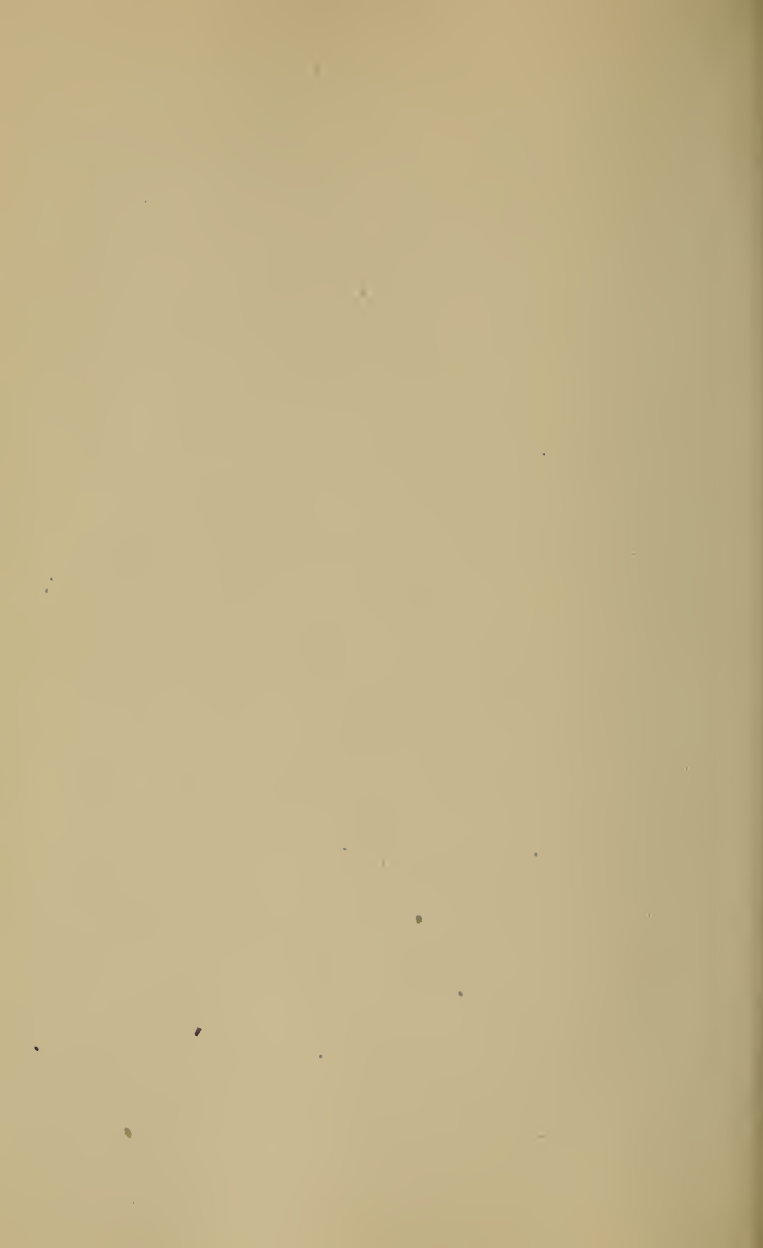


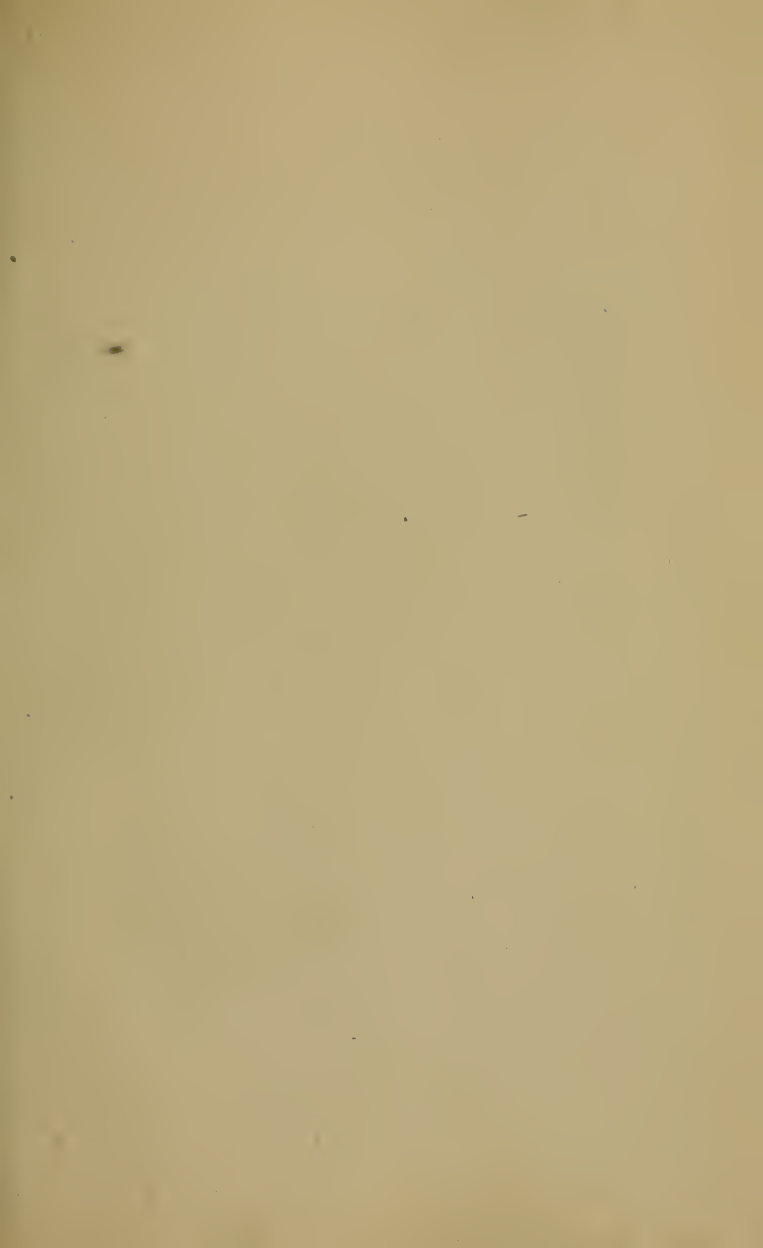


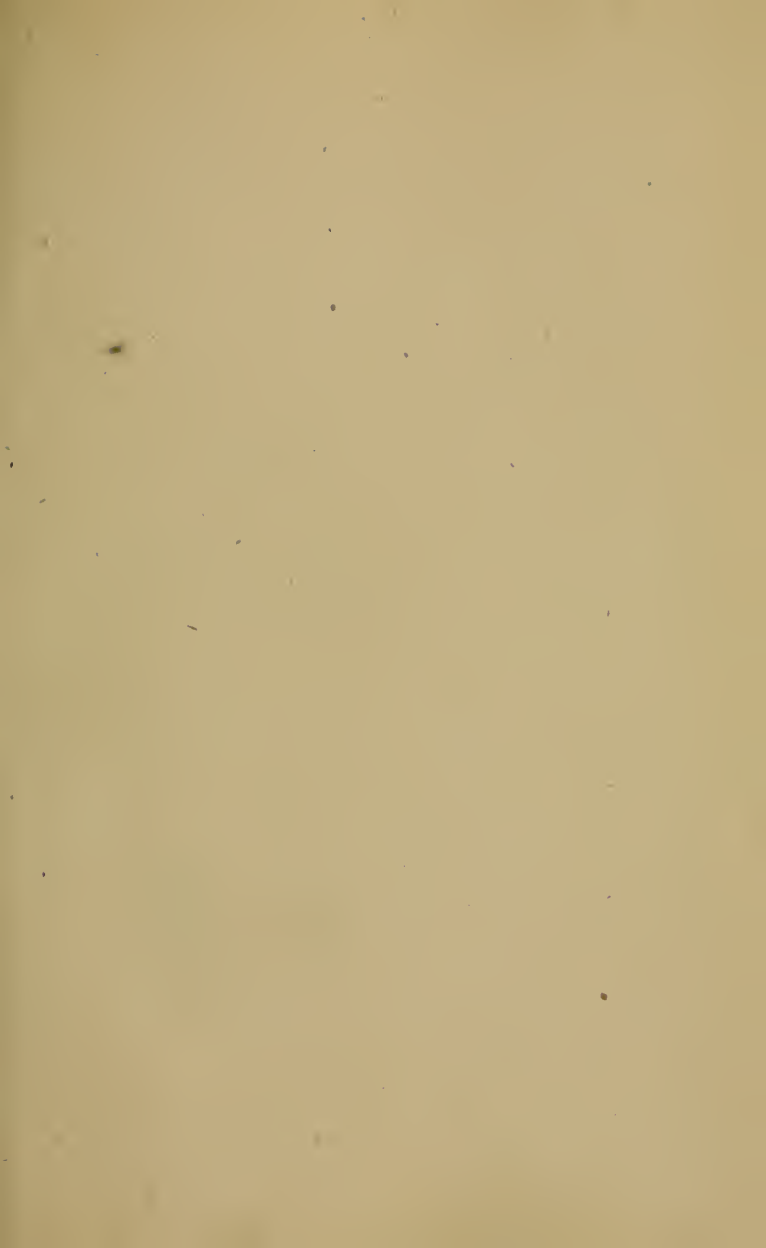


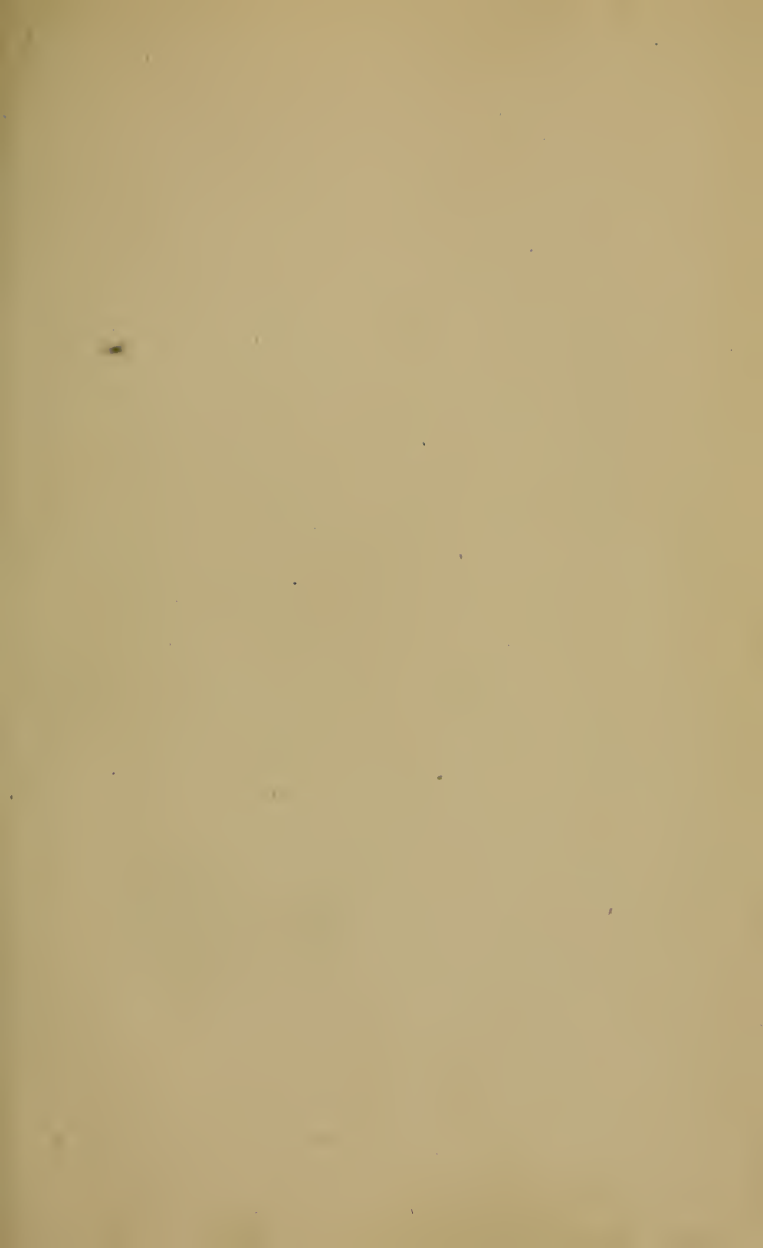


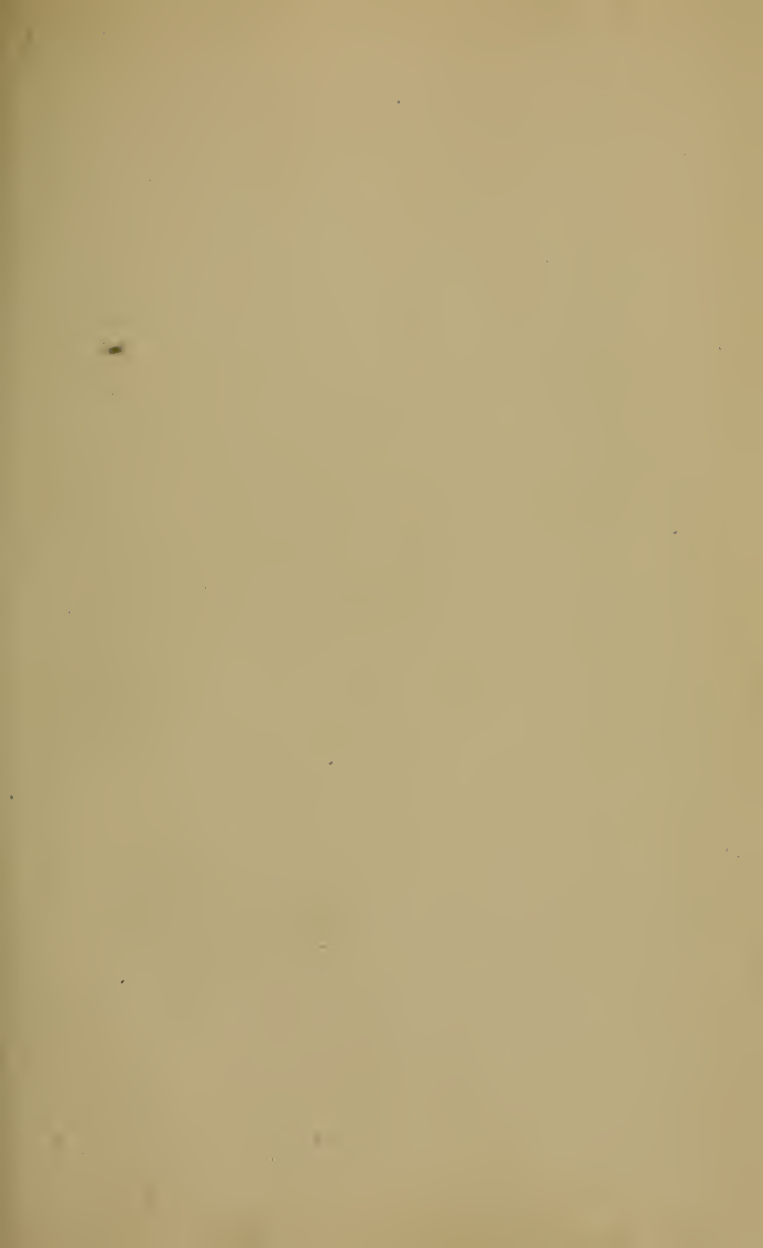


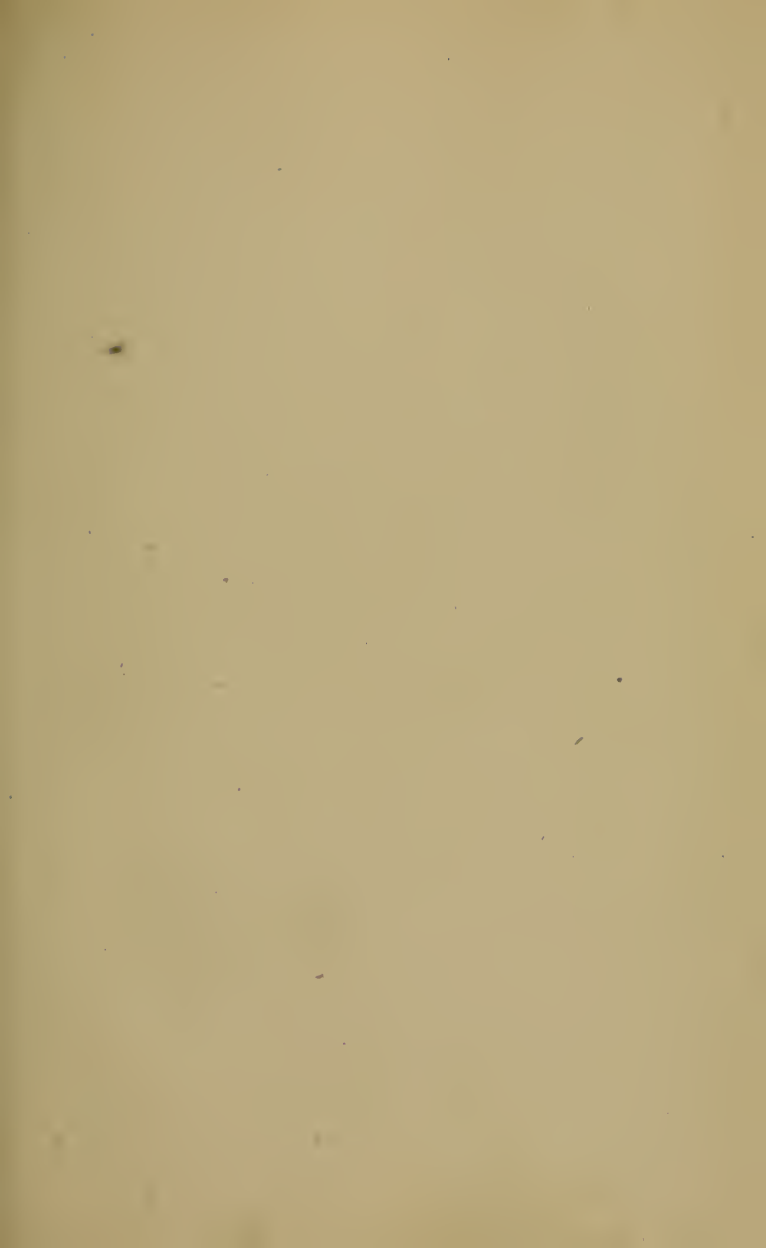


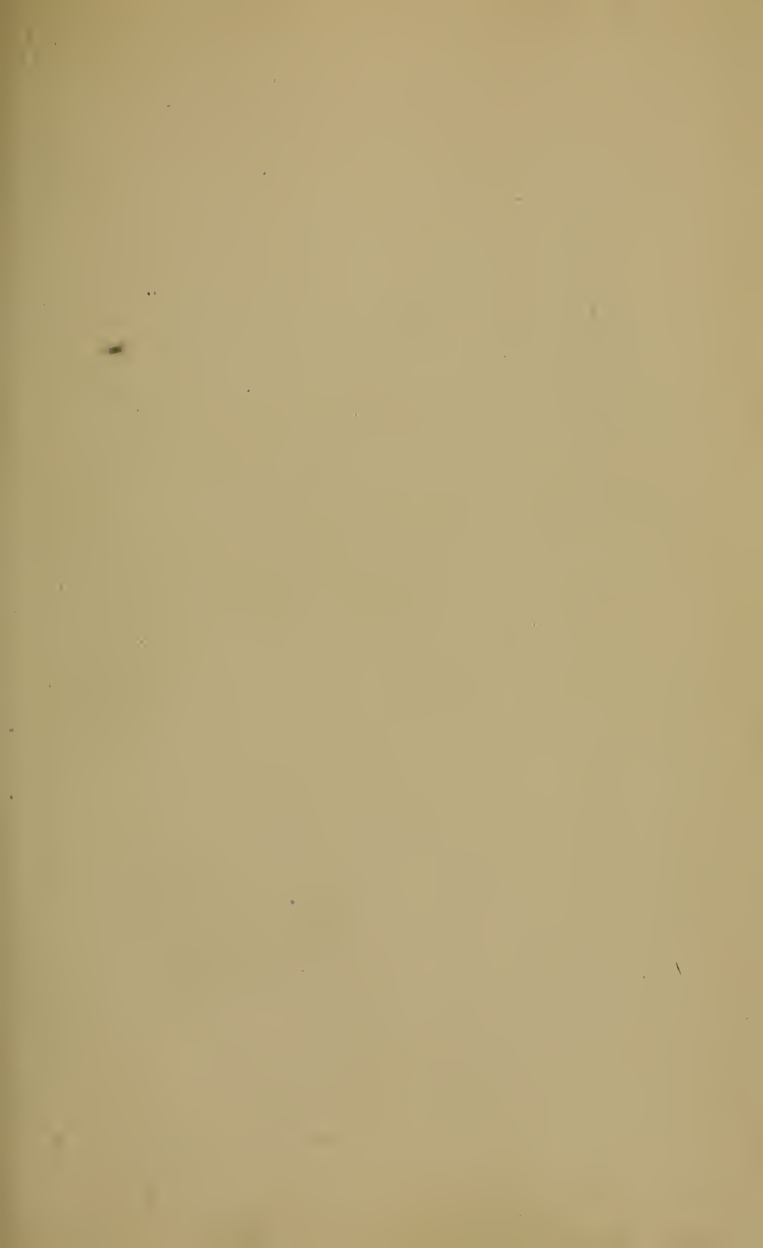


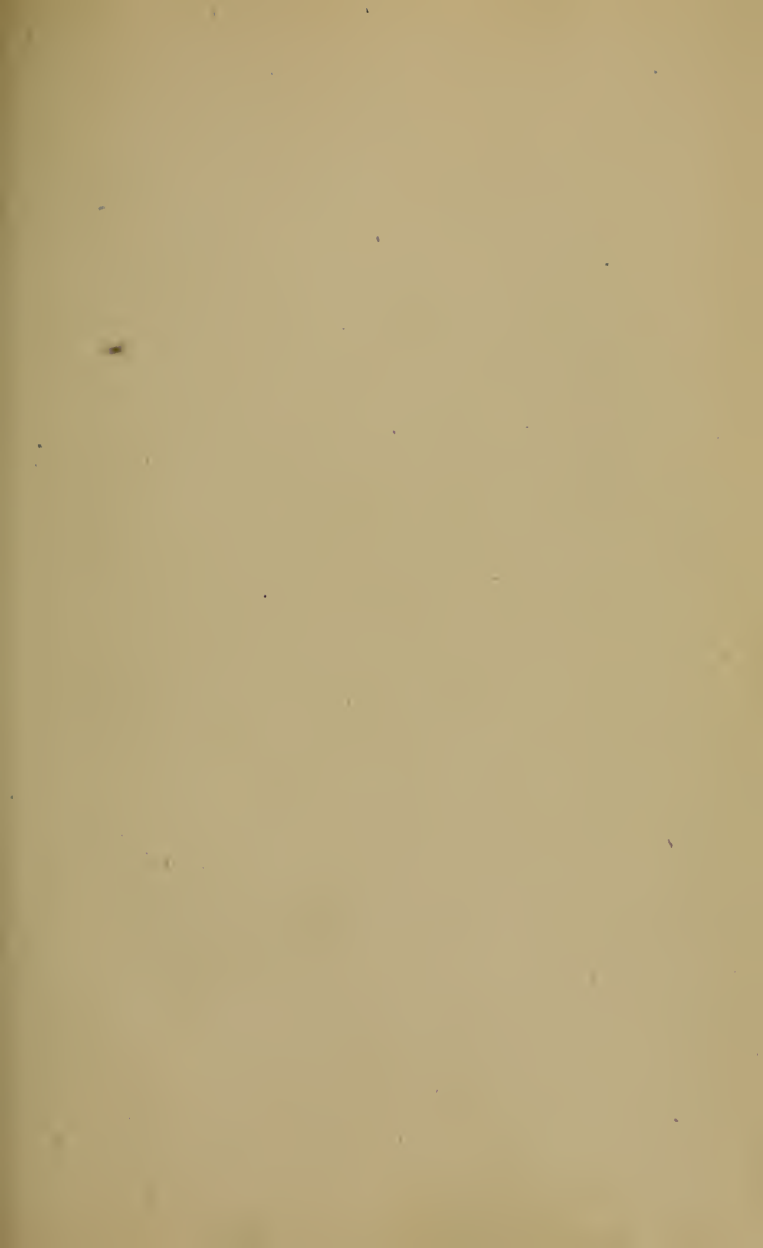


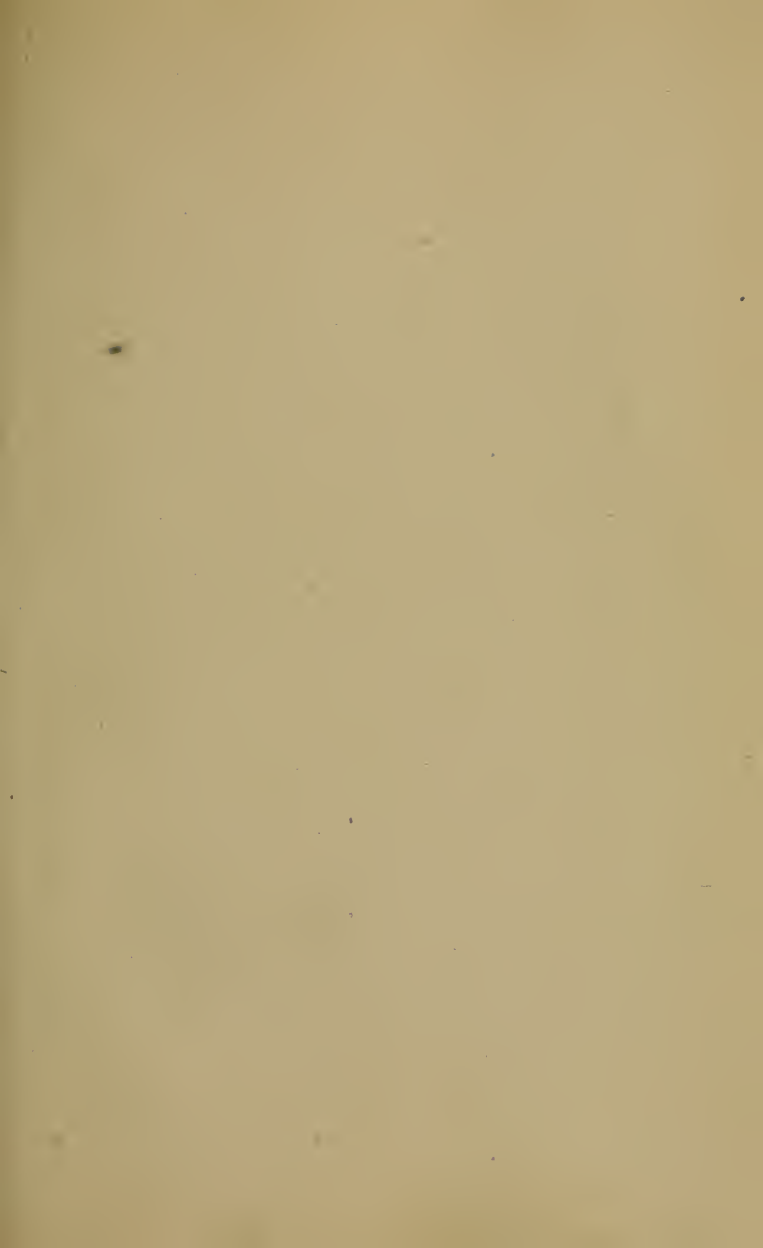


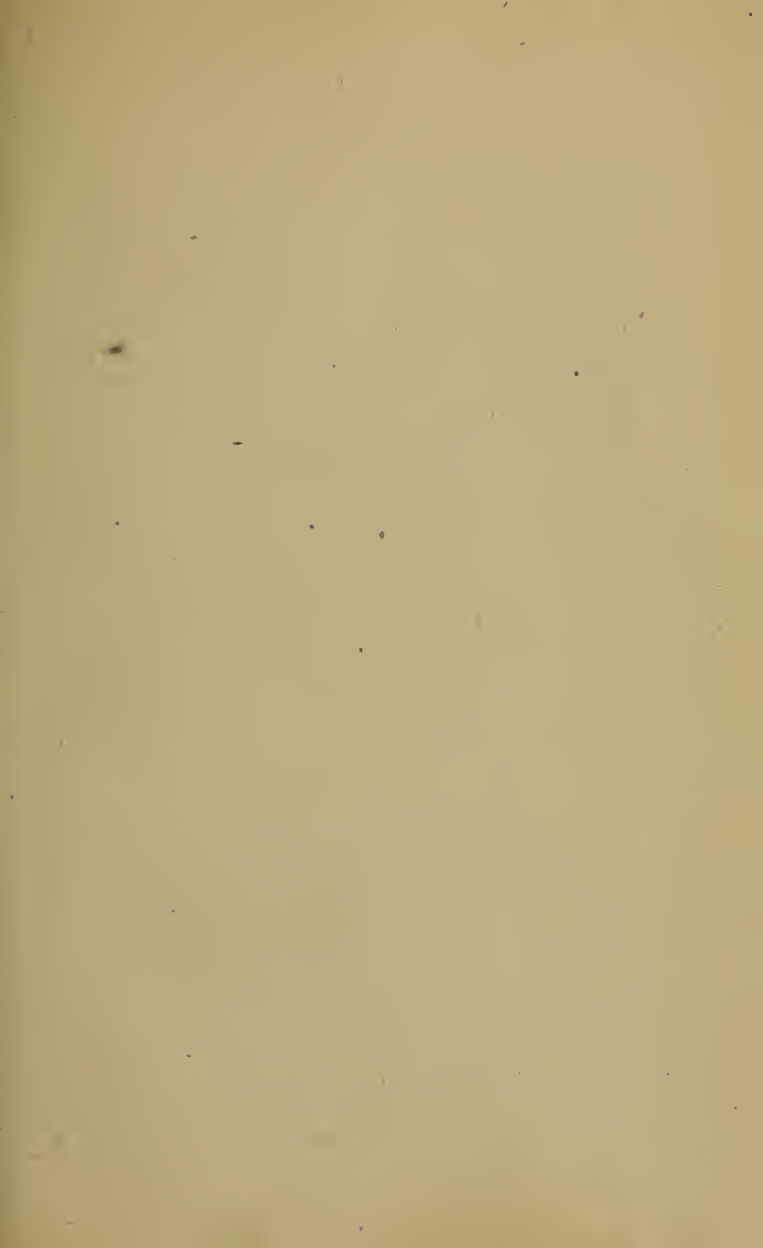


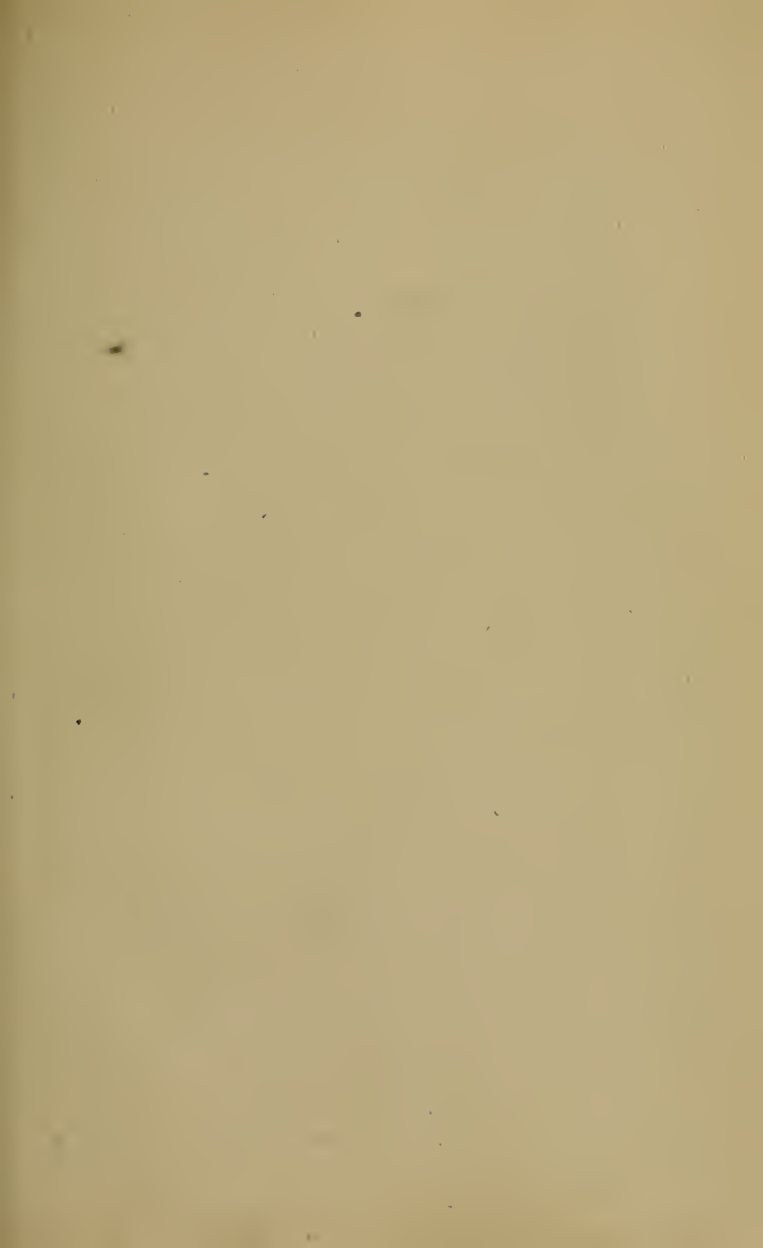


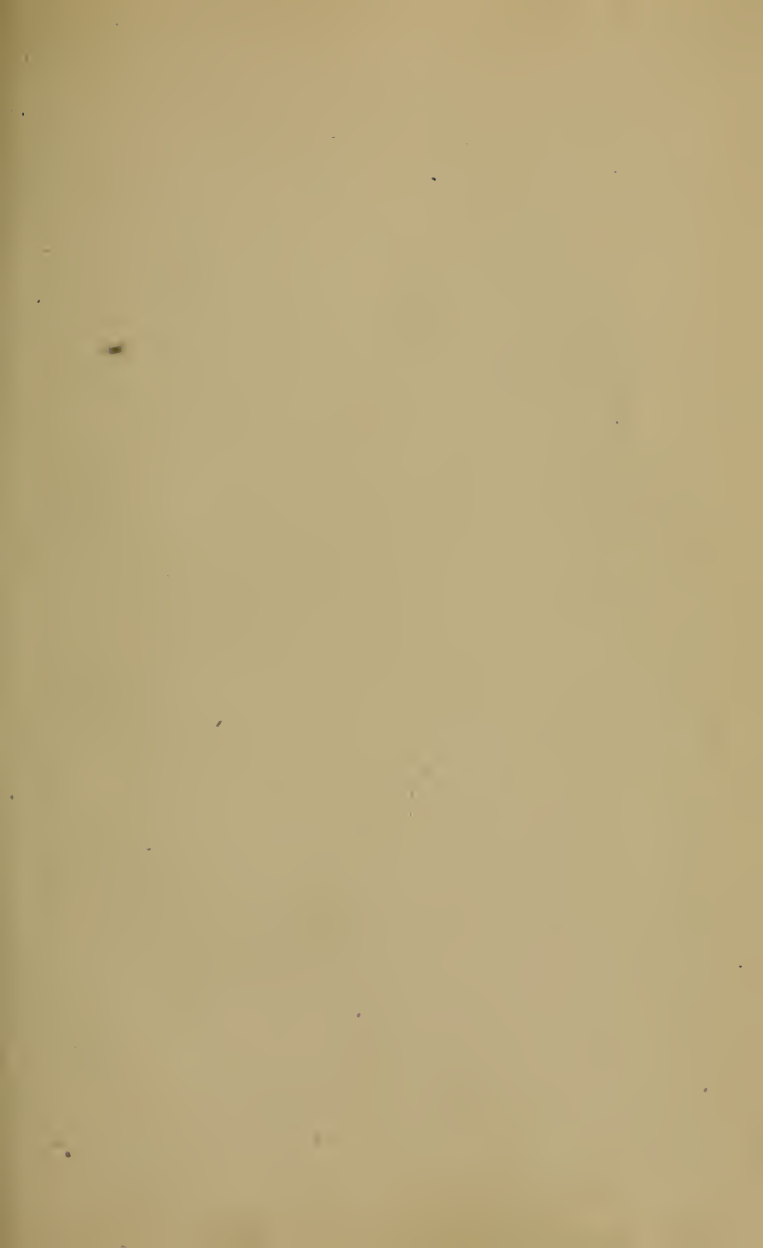




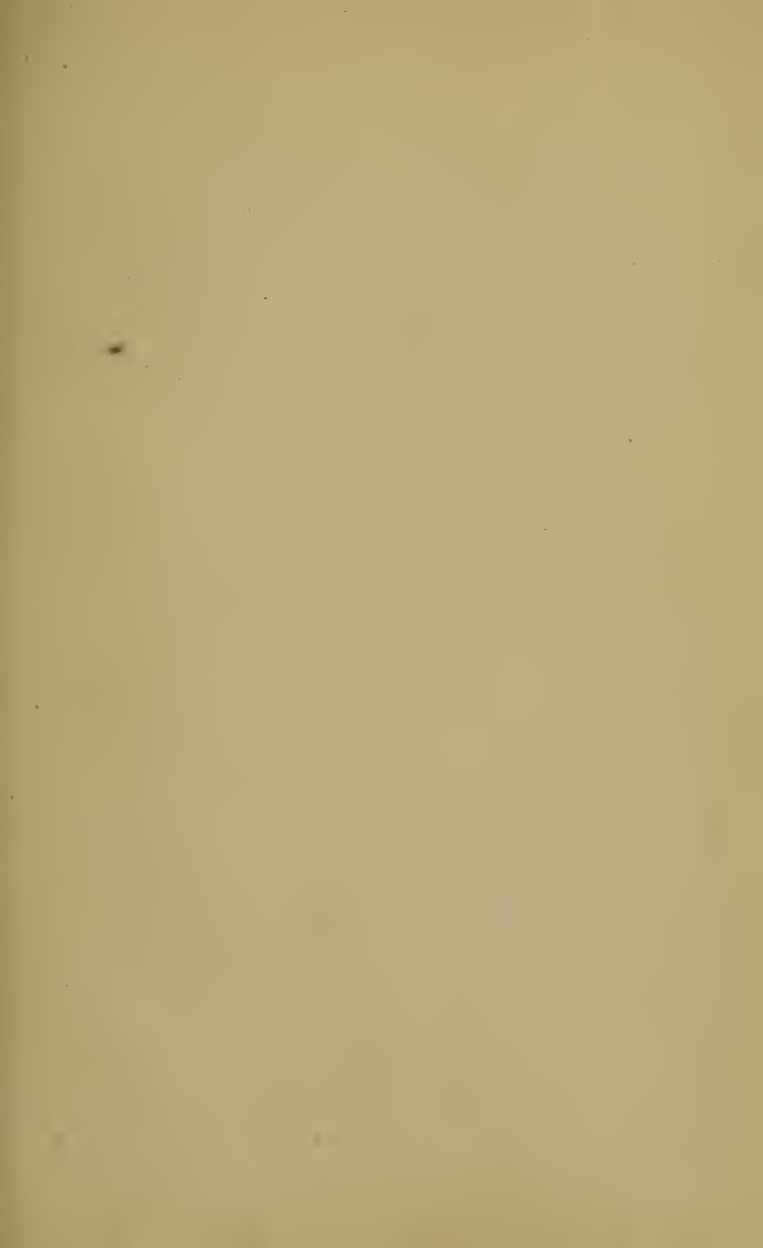


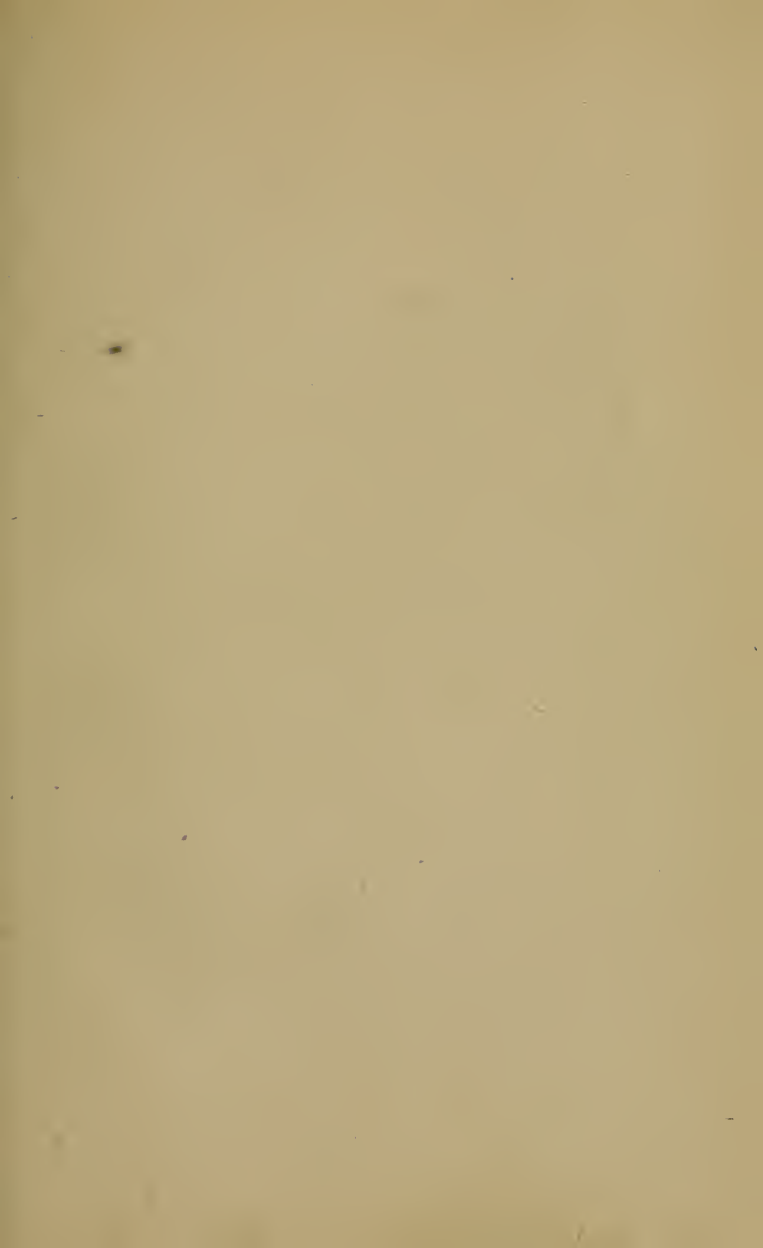


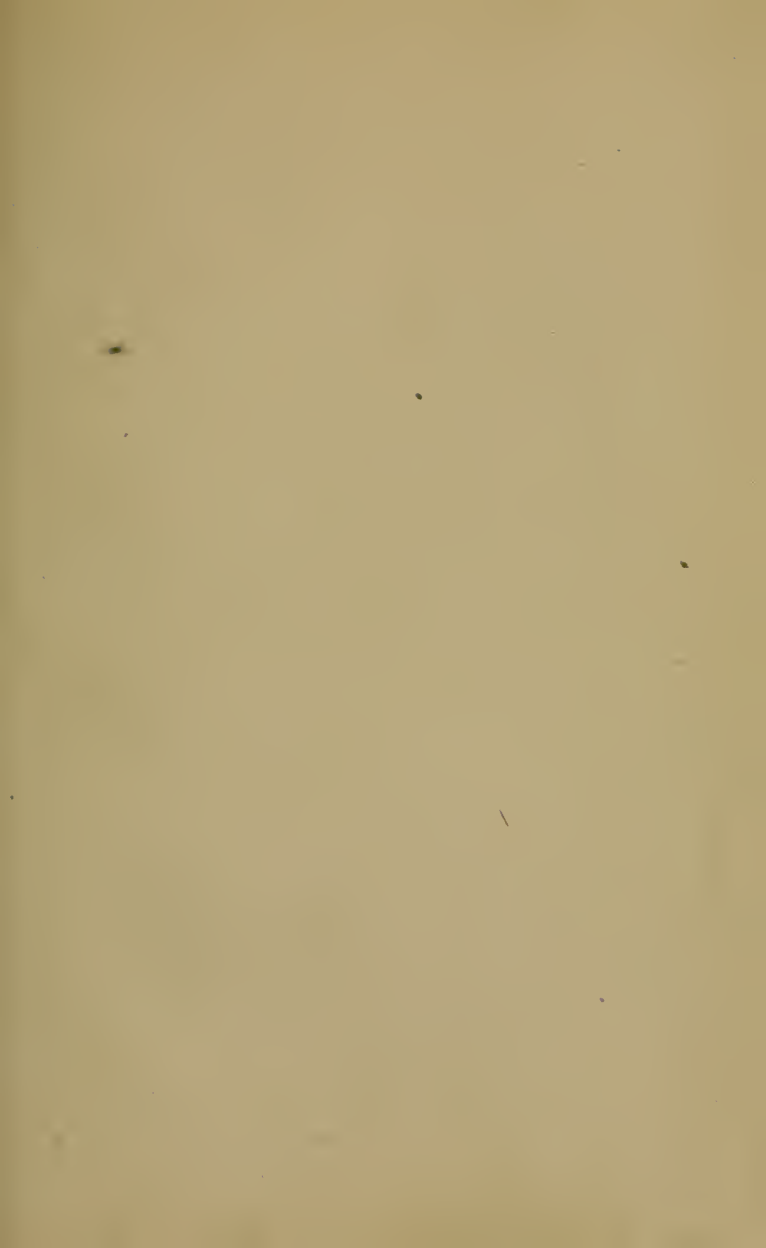


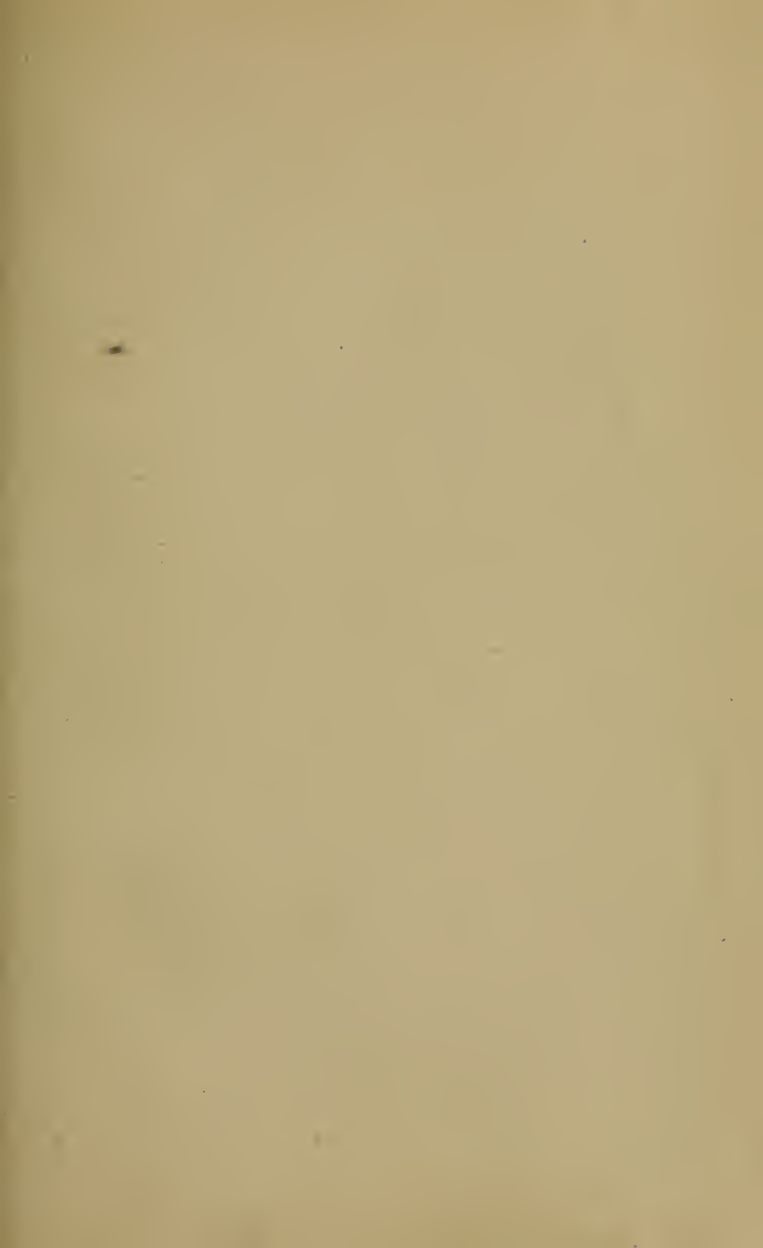


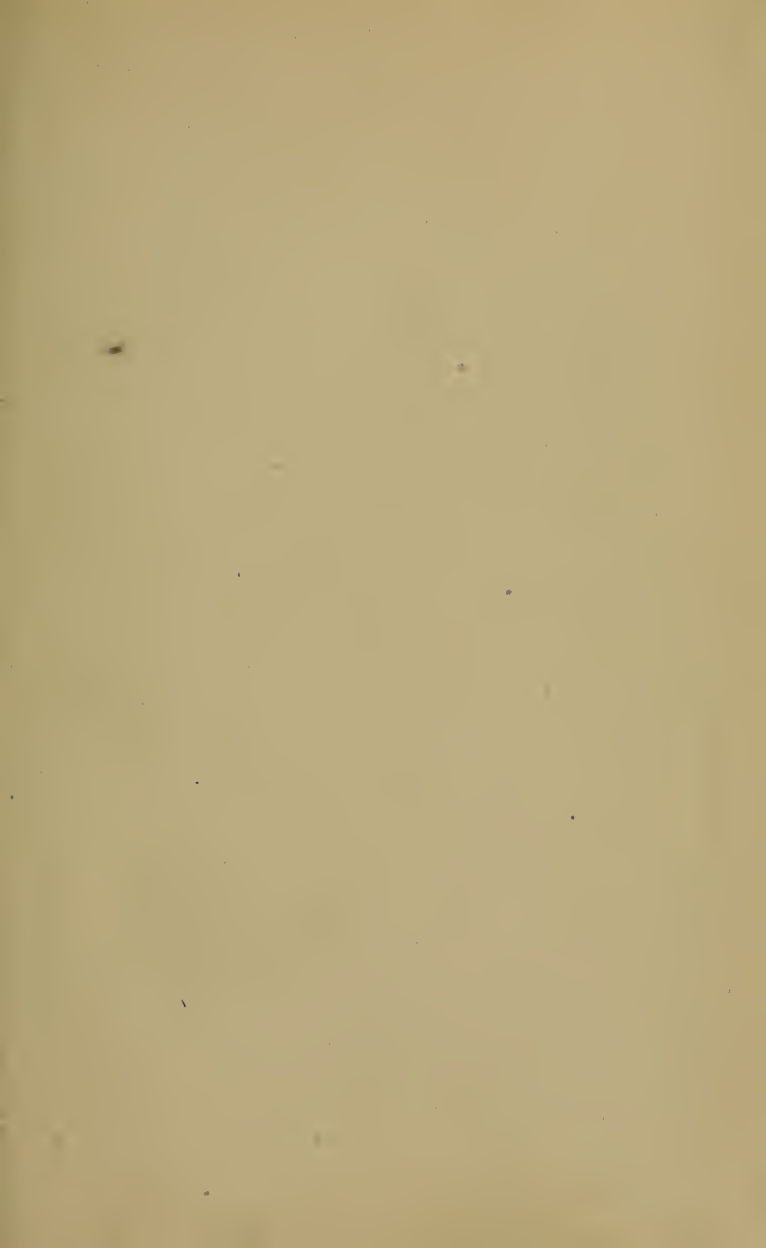


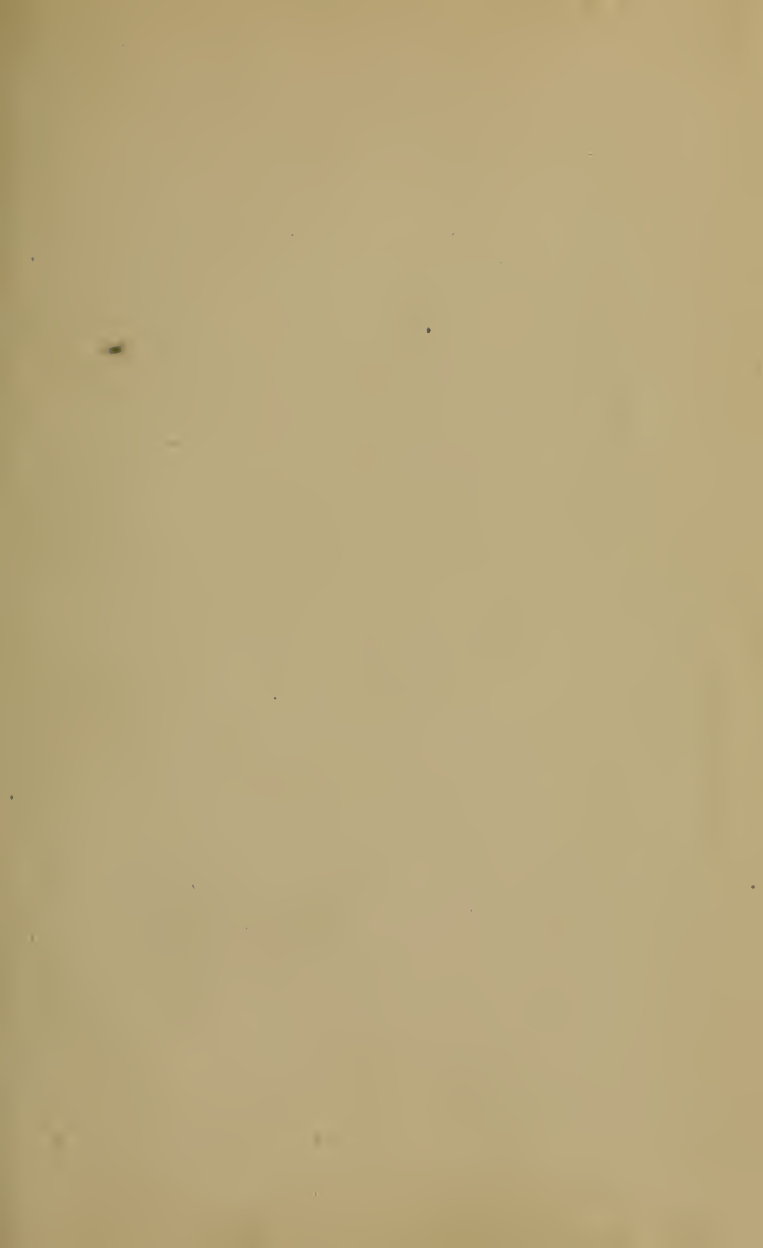


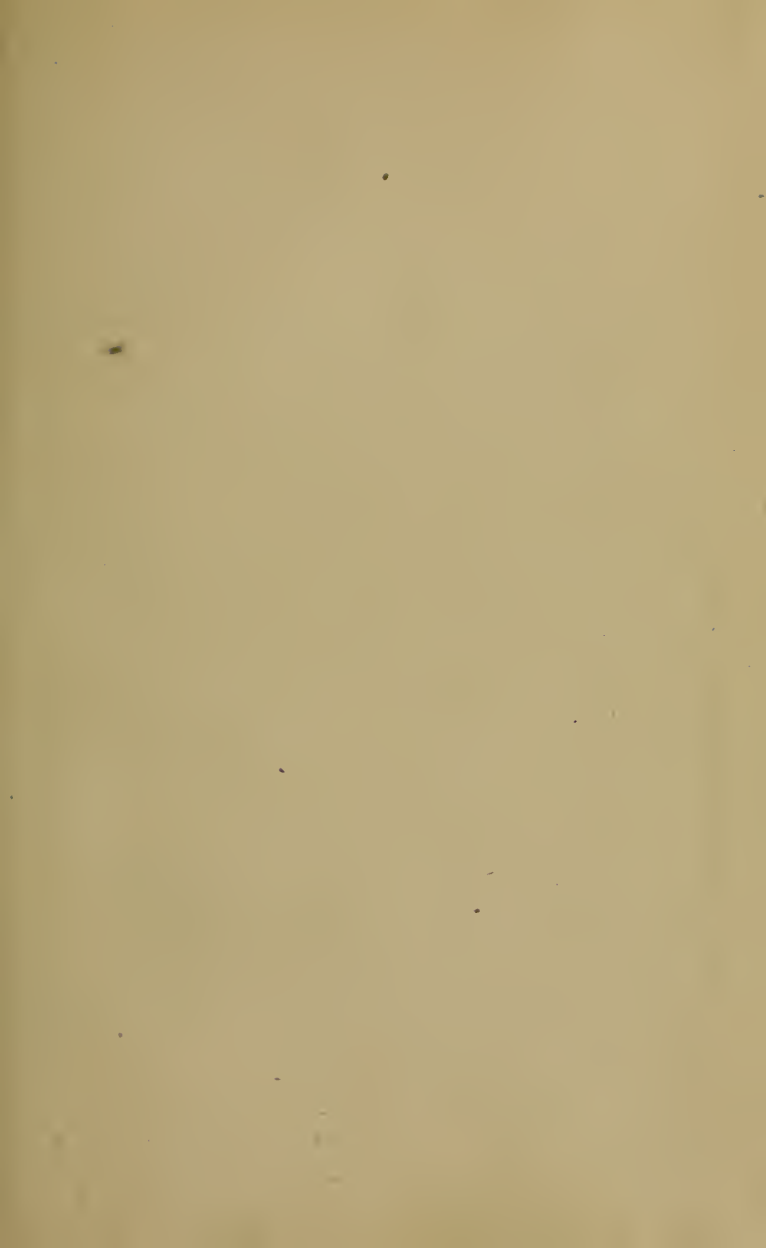




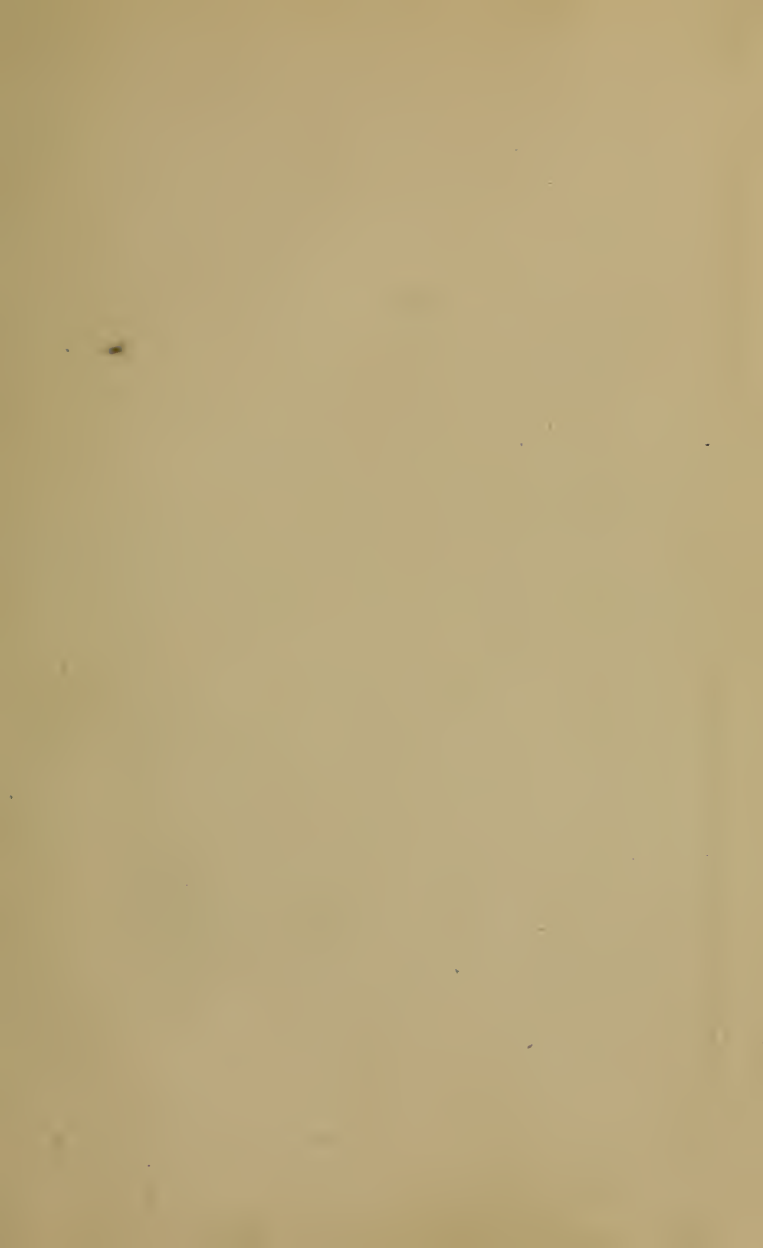
















Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: March 2009

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